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CHIEF EDITOR:
JIAN RONG
NEWS EDITOR:
HOU MINGXIN
DESIGNER:
YANG GEN

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The As Four
design collective
– fusion fashion
'made with love'.



北京青年报
BEIJING YOUTH DAILY



Meng Jinghui dazzles and perplexes with experimental drama at the National Theater.

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A wealth of Miao culture survives in Biasha, 'a place where trees flourish'.

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'Pyramids of China' in danger of collapse

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Brussels' famous Manneken Pis is decked out in a spacesuit in honor of Chinese astronaut Fei Junlong's visit to Belgium

Xinhua Photo

Scandal-hit Carrefour sees reputation take a dive

By Chu Meng

Four negative reports about poor quality food sold at French supermarket giant Carrefour's Beijing outlets have put the retailer in the spotlight this past week. Worse, a batch of cancer-causing children's clothes has also been found in one of its outlets in Guangdong province. These incidents have severely affected Carrefour's reputation in the capital.

Maggots were found in dry fish. Bread was on sale with a best before date of 2007. Another food item had two production date labels. Two different brands of frozen dumplings were sold in the same pack-

aging, confusing consumers. These incidents were reported by citizens at different outlets on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

"If incidents like these occurred back in France, the outlet would be shut down immediately," said one of the complainants, whose surname is Yang. She had previously lived in Paris for five years, but had not visited Carrefour's Beijing outlets since her return to China. "I don't understand why they operate so dramatically differently in France and China, both in terms of their environment and quality. In France people are so serious about food. They have huge freezers there, and a wide range of

choices - and definitely no flies."

Li Shaohua, an official with the Beijing Industrial and Commercial Bureau, said "They don't respect domestic consumers, and lack a proper management system. We are discussing these incidents with the sanitary supervision department in the hopes of finding an appropriate resolution."

Customers of China's Carrefour hypermarkets spend an average of 110 yuan each visit; a significant figure when multiplied by the country's consumer base. The world's second-largest retailer recently announced plans to open 20 new hypermarkets in China this year.

The World Cup kicks off in less than a week. You can score big time with next week's edition of *Beijing Today*, which will include a pull-out poster supplement with all the TV schedules, match times and information you need to make sure you don't miss any of the action.

'Lady boys' pack them in

By Annie Wei

A tourist resort on the outskirts of Beijing has hit on a novel way to pull in the crowds – by staging a racy performance by two Thai transsexuals.

Word of the 'lady boys' antics at the resort, in Mentougou District, quickly spread online, arousing people's interests, as well as doubts about the shows legality.

Staff at the resort said they have had a full house ever since the scantily clad transsexuals first took to the stage on April 15.

Dressed in bikinis and caked in make-up, they perform for 20 minutes as part of a three-

hour show every night, from 7pm to 10pm. One gets the crowd warmed up with a saucy strip tease while the other sings a Thai song and skips across the stage. When the show comes to a close, audience members are invited up for photos with the pair at a cost of 40 yuan each.

"My family and I drove here from Haidian district and spent 100 yuan to see the transsexuals, which we have never seen before," said Mr. Zhang, a member of the audience. "I think it's quite interesting. But some parts of the show were a bit too raunchy and not suitable for my son."

"I wanted to take a picture with them too," Zhang said, "but there are too many people waiting in line."

Staff at the resort say the two Thai transsexuals do not belong to any entertainment or performance organization. They are hired directly by the resort and have tourist visas. "They can't stay here longer than two months, which is good for the business because no audience wants to see the same face all the time," said one member of staff.

He said the market back in Thailand was very competitive and transsexuals were increas-

ingly looking for work in other countries. "It's easy to hire lady boys from Thailand," he said, "when these two leave, they will introduce us to others who will work for us."

The member of staff refused to say how much money the pair made every night.

Lin Zengwei, vice-director of the marketing department at the Beijing Culture Bureau, said that foreigners who came to China for entertainment should get approval from the relevant department. He said that if the 'lady boys' did not get the approval then their actions are illegal.

Beijing to build world's highest ferris wheel

By Han Manman

Beijingers will soon have the chance to enjoy a bird's-eye view of the city - construction has started on the next contender for the title of the world's highest ferris wheel in Chaoyang Park.

The new ferris wheel will be 208 meters high, higher even than the London Eye, which is currently the world's second biggest wheel with a 132-metre diameter. Riders will have 40 minutes to enjoy full views of the city from one of the 48 air-conditioned capsules, which will be able to hold a total of 1,920 passengers.

Currently the world's highest ferris wheel is in the eastern city Nanchang, capital of east China's Jiangxi Province, which beats the London Eye by 25 meters.

Investors are pouring nearly US\$100 million into the construction of the wheel, which is expected to be ready in time for the 2008 Olympic Games.

Car hire service between Beijing and Tsingdao

By Lucky Zhang

A car hire service between Beijing and Tsingdao came into operation on Tuesday.

The service will enable people to hire cars in any of the two cities and return the vehicles to either city.

Tsingdao will host the sailing at the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. More than 40 athletes, and 800 staff and judges from the International Olympic Committee and International Sailing Federation will visit the coastal city.

Bosses from Capital Auto Rental Company, which set up the hire service, reckon it will make travelling between the two host cities easier.

The company also runs a hire and return service between Beijing and Shanghai.

'The ultimate movie experience' – IMAX comes to Beijing

By Lucky Zhang

Beijing's cinemagoers had the 'ultimate movie experience' on Tuesday at the showing of the city's first ever IMAX film.

Disaster movie *Poseidon* was shown at UME International Cineplex, which has recently installed IMAX facilities.

IMAX is short for Image Maximum, a method of displaying crystal clear images up to eight stories high with digital surround sound. IMAX movies are shot on 70mm film.

Representatives from UME, IMAX, and the CCTV movie channel cut the 70mm film instead of ribbons to celebrate the opening of Beijing's first IMAX hall.



The year long project to renovate oil-paintings at the Ancient Bell Museum in Dazhong Temple finished on Wednesday. All the paintings on the eaves of the Museum have been restored in the Qing dynasty style. The Bell Culture Exhibition also opened with ten exhibition areas highlighting early stage bells and foreign bells.

CFP Photo

Rare porcelain reproduced

By Jiang Xubo

After eight years of painstaking research, experts have discovered the secret of making decorative enamel porcelain.

Up until the 19th century, Chinese craftsmen produced pieces of the rare porcelain but over 200 years the skillss were lost.

Only now have experts discovered how the rare porcelain was made. They will display 50 duplicates of the 20 porcelain pieces - including vases, bottles and boxes - next Tuesday at the National Museum of China (NMC).

One set of each will be kept at the museum and put on display. The rest will go on sale when the exhibition ends.

The rare porcelain pieces were reproduced after eight years of research by the NMC and Xiong Jianjun, an expert in firing porcelain, from Jingdezhen, Jiangxi Province.

"The most difficult thing in making enamel decorative porcelain is getting the proportion of pigments right," said Xiong. "It is hard to tell how many times we tried before we succeeded."

The methods for making the porcelain consist of dozens of processes and can be traced back to the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911). A traditional ceramic kiln heated by firewood is used to fire the porcelain.

The porcelain is known as the 'Queen of Decorative Porcelain' because of its outstanding beauty.

Plans to stub out smoking in public places

By Jiang Xubo

The Ministry of Health is planning to enforce a ban on smoking in public places, with schools and universities, medical institutions and places offering services to children at the top of the list.

Government chiefs will include the ban in a new amendment to current regulations on the sanitary administration of public places and propose it for the State Council's approval.

"In addition to child-oriented places, we plan to initially ban smoking in hospitals, schools, post offices, stations, meeting

rooms, government administration buildings, department stores and cinemas. We will consider extending the ban to include other public places like restaurants," said Yang Gonghuan, deputy director of the country's Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

The center is one of the administration departments in charge of the amendment of the regulations.

The Ministry of Health has already launched a no-smoking campaign for the Olympic Games, with bans on smoking at all hos-

pitals, on public transport and in buildings.

Sixty seven major hospitals across the city promised an immediate ban on smoking and the sale of cigarettes.

Research shows that most smokers in China spark up their first cigarette before they are 20. In 1984 the average age for first time smokers was 22. Around one million people die every year in China from smoking related diseases, according to the ministry's Smoking and Health, a report issued on the eve of the 19th World No-Tobacco Day.

Chinese smokers reveal they are not quitters

By Han Manman

This year's China Quit Smoking Contest has just finished, and the winners have been announced, but the competition has a long way to go before it makes an impact on China's die-hard smokers. The 10,000 yuan first prize went to a smoker from Jiangxi Province, and the 5,000 yuan second prize went to a smoker from Fujian Province.

The winners passed urine tests that proved that they did not consume tobacco products from the

start of the competition on May 2 until its conclusion on May 30, according to the National Tobacco Control Office. Entrants had to be daily smokers for longer than one year to be eligible.

It is the fourth time China, the world's largest producer and consumer of tobacco and home to 350 million smokers, has taken part in the international contest. However, the latest statistics reveal that 70 percent of China's smokers do not want to quit. On this year's World

No-Tobacco Day on May 31, 25 volunteer college students from China's Cancer Research Foundation distributed material about giving up smoking to passersby on Wangfujing Street, but discovered that many refused the material.

The National Tobacco Control Office said that the winner of the US\$10,000 International Quit Smoking Contest has yet to be announced. The winner will be selected by the WHO, with the winner to be announced in July.

'Pyramids of China' in danger of collapse

Clay mausoleums dating back to the Western Xia Dynasty (1032-1227) in northwest China's Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, known as the 'Pyramids of China', are in danger of collapse due to damage by the elements, especially wind erosion, over the past 1,000 years.

"The largest tomb, about 15 meters high, has a two meter deep, one meter wide crack; and a 10 meter section of the western wall has collapsed," said Dai Wenzhen, deputy director of the administration office of the tombs.

Most of the tombs, which contain the remains of Western Xia aristocrats, face similar

problems, Dai said, adding that some are now reported to be in a state of 'partial ruin'.

"The whole group of nobles' tombs are in danger of vanishing," Dai warned. He is calling for emergency measures to protect the historic site.

"Protection of the tombs must be implemented straight away," Dai said.

The Western Xia Imperial Tombs comprise nine mausoleums of emperors and 207 tombs of nobles.

In 2000, the Chinese government allocated 10 million yuan (US\$ 1.25 million) for the repair and protection of the Number Three imperial

tomb. Experts sprayed, daubed and injected chemical materials into the tomb walls.

Experts also reinforced the bases of four other imperial tombs to curb the effects of wind erosion.

These efforts have seen the degradation of some of the imperial tombs slowed significantly. However, other nobles' tombs have not received adequate protection due to a lack of funds.

The Western Xia mausoleums, are listed together with 13 other natural attractions and cultural relics in the first group on China's catalog of major heritage sites (Xinhua)

New measures to rein in runaway property market

By Han Manman

Property hunters buying an apartment larger than 90 meters will pay a down payment of 30 percent instead of 20 percent, a move aimed at reducing the pace of the property boom.

The down payment for property less than 90 square meters remains at 20 percent, unless the property is a second home, which would make it eligible for the increased deposit.

Anna Kalifa, Head of Research for Jones Lang LaSalle's Beijing operations, said the new measures are clearly aimed at ensuring that there is adequate housing in the low and middle-income ranges.

"By raising the down payment ratios, the government is sending the message that speculators and the wealthy should have to pay more for a home up front than should home buyers looking for smaller units, that is, those in the lower income brackets," said Kalifa.

In addition, the taxation period extends from two to five years. Owners who sell their property within five years will have to pay the 5.5 percent tax, which will impact short-term speculative buyers.

From high kicks to free kicks

By Lucky Zhang

The Abbot of the Shaolin Temple as a master of Chinese traditional martial arts will be invited to watch this year's final of the FIFA World Cup in Berlin this July.

The President of the Federation International de Football Association (FIFA), Joseph S. Blatter, invited Abbot Shi Yongxin of Shaolin Temple to come to Berlin following a request by Russian President Vladimir Putin.

President Putin visited Shaolin Temple this March and met Abbot Shi Yongxin. Putin suggested to Blatter that inviting the Abbot to watch the World Cup final would promote football in Buddhist circles.

The Abbot Shi Yongxin is the 30th Abbot of Shaolin Temple, the biggest Buddhist Temple in China, with a 1,500-year history.



A train running on the tracks of the Qing-Tibet Railway. The whole project will be completed by the end of this month. Xinhua Photo

You can run, but you can't hide

By Annie Wei

If the stresses of urban living are becoming too much, why not give into your homicidal rage by heading out west and killing something?

Overpopulation of certain wild animals in the west has led to plans to set up a formal hunting club, according to Zhao Xuemin, vice-director of State Forestry Administration, speaking at a forestry development summit held this week in Chengdu.

Zhao said that the over-density of certain wild animals has affected the local eco-system, so

hunting is seen as a good way of addressing the situation, especially in Shaanxi, Qinghai, Gansu, and Sichuan provinces, as well as Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region.

Up to this point, only a few travel agencies have been approved to organize hunting parties for foreigners.

China Adventure Travel and China Women Travel, two of the approved agencies, admitted that they have started selling hunting packages in the west.

The receptionist from China Adventure Travel said all the tour-

ists were from abroad. "May is a peak season and all staff from that department are very busy now."

For example, Qinghai Province has three hunting areas, in Balong, Gouli and Fanjia. April to May and September to October are the two hunting seasons.

Zhao said that the government still had strict controls concerning wild-animal hunting. The numbers and types of animals that can be hunted are limited, hunting guns need to be registered in the local People's Security Bureau, and supervisors are needed at each site.

Pre-op tranny father spurned by Miss World organizers

By Han Manman

The Miss World dreams of Gao Tingting, a pre-op transsexual father of two seven-year-old daughters, were dashed by the Miss World Beijing Commission on Wednesday.

The commission refused Gao's application to enter the 56th Miss World China contest in July.

"We do not discriminate against transsexuals. Gao was only refused because he is not eligible," said Mr. Han from the Beijing Commission. According to Han, Gao has had surgery to her face and throat to look

more feminine, but 'she' has yet to have a sex-change operation. So, 'her' sex is still listed as 'male' on ID cards. Only single girls aged 18 to 25 are eligible to join the competition, which also makes the 32-year-old married man ineligible.

"I want to become the most beautiful woman in the world," said Gao. Gao first thought of becoming a woman 10 years ago when 'she' was serving in the army. Six years ago, 'she' dressed in a skirt for the first time, and from that day on she fell in love with that feeling. Gao said 'she' would be

much better than Chen Lili if 'she' were allowed to enter the beauty competition. Chen Lili is a transsexual who competed during the Sichuan regional competition of Miss Universe in March, 2004. However, the organizers denied her the next phase-entry because she was not born a woman.

Gao proudly recalled the experience of modeling competitions, as well as the 50 to 60 men who had sexually propositioned him. Gao's wife has separated from him but has not formally filed for divorce. Gao's twin daughters still call 'her' daddy.

Restrictions on single family housings

By Chen Shasha

In a bid to restrict over-heated investment in luxury house building, the State Council has issued a ban on the construction of single family houses, including low density villa and townhouse developments. From June 1, mortgage down payments and housing transactions involving single family houses will not be permitted.

The statement also called for stronger supervision over land used for housing developments. A high fee will be charged for the land slated for development that is left idle for one year, and construction rights will be revoked if it remains unused for two years.

CSC seeks more support for foreign students

By Chen Shasha

China hopes cooperation with foreign countries will benefit foreign students on scholarships in China, according to Zhang Xiuqin, Secretary-General of China Scholarship Council (CSC).

Foreign students on scholarships from the Chinese government account for 7,206 of the over 140,000 international students in China.

In 2005, CSC arranged for 8,235 international students to study in China, through Chinese and foreign governments funded scholarship programs, representing a nine percent increase on the previous year.

Brief News

Deserts shrinking

The country's deserts are shrinking by some 7,600 square kilometers every year, according to Zhu Lieke, deputy director of the State Forestry Administration.

Cities suffer from severe air pollution

Some 40 percent of over 500 cities being monitored across the country suffered from moderate or severe air pollution last year, according to the State Environmental Protection Administration.

Security guards for the Olympic Games

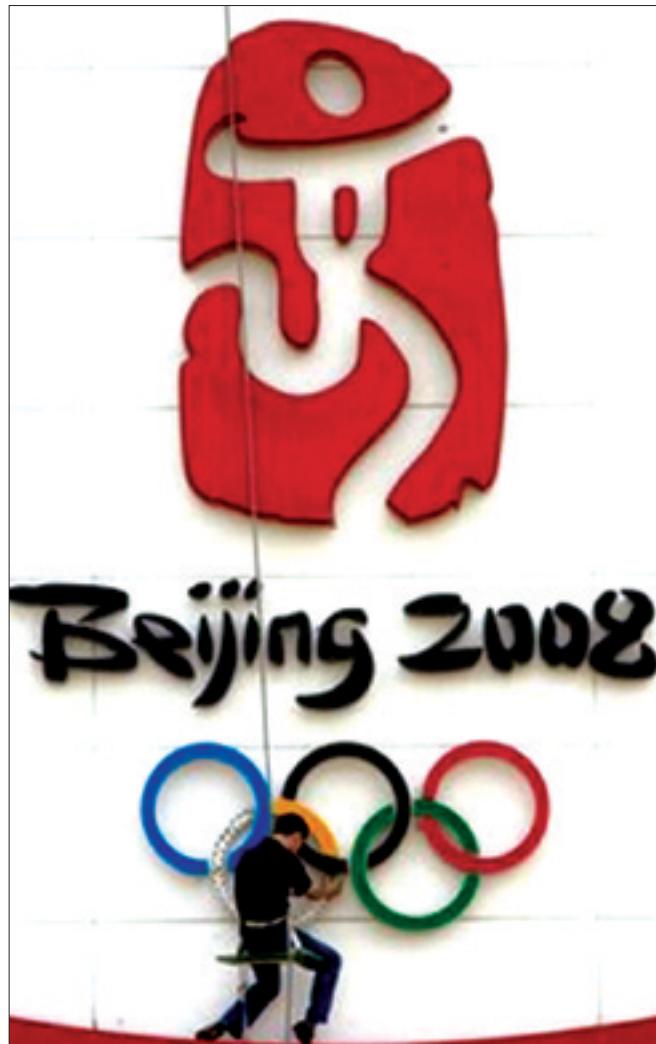
The first 100 of the 80,000 security guards who will help to guard stadiums and residential areas during the Olympic Games began to receive first aid training on Tuesday.

Illegal cabs destroyed

This Wednesday, local authorities destroyed some 500 vehicles confiscated in the city's campaign against illegal cabs, according to Beijing Municipal Public Security Bureau.

(By Jiang Xubo)

Beijing promotes Olympic Games



Maonoa, May 26 (KHN) – It's a modern city that's been the seat of empires, now Beijing is growing into something else.

"Beijing presents an image that is at once ancient in its traditions yet youthful in its vitality," said Wei Wang of the Beijing Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games.

Speaking at the East-West Center, Wang said his city hopes to host the most spectacular Olympic games ever held.

"The Beijing Olympic games will be a magnificent gala to

embody the aspirations of the Chinese people and the people of the world for peace, development and progress," Wang said.

University of Hawaii Athletic Director Herman Frazier's been involved with the Olympics for 20 years and knows what an Olympiad can do for a host country.

"As we all know, the Olympics is a stage," Frazier said. "And to see them put on something as spectacular as the Olympics, I think will be wonderful."

With athletes in training and

facilities under construction, Beijing officials said they'll be ready.

The Olympic games are big business. Some say this Olympiad could open up China's economy to even more parts of the world, and that could create opportunities for companies that call Hawaii home.

"Once China opens up and Beijing opens up," Frazier said, "we will see a lot of partnerships and a lot of things happening between Hawaii and also Beijing."

Follow-up interview:



The Beijing delegation attended a sports seminar at the East-West Center at the University of Hawaii. Wang Wei gave a speech at a luncheon in which he described Beijing's preparation for the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games.

When I say the Olympic Games is a stage I mean it is an opportunity for you to showcase the legacy of your city and country. For instance, after the Games, more people from around the world will visit your country, which provide huge opportunities for Beijing and China to communicate with the world.

But I also hope the Olympic Games will be a turning point for China and Chinese people to realize that sports is not only an issue of physical competition. It is more an issue of the health of the entire population. We need to reinforce sports education for school children, for young people and for people of all ages, for the sake of our future.

— Herman Frazier, athletic director, University of Hawaii

A worker makes repairs on the Olympic Games countdown clock sign beside Tian'anmen Square. Beijing announced that it will ban smoking on public transport and in all indoor workplaces as part of plans for a tobacco-free 2008 Beijing Olympics.

(AP Photo)

Indian stewardesses ready to serve on Chinese airline



Xinhua Photo

They are the first group of Indian stewardesses ever hired by a Chinese air company.

Their monthly salary will be US\$800 per month, a spokesman for the China Eastern Airlines said.

China Eastern Airlines opened flights from Beijing to Shanghai then to New Delhi in March 2002. Now there are four weekly flights on the route.

The air company also began to provide air services for passengers from Beijing and Shanghai to Bombay and vice versa in April last year, increasing its flights between the two nations to seven a week.

To recruit foreign stewardesses is one of the measures China Eastern Airlines has taken to further localise its air services.

Currently, the company has recruited 100 in-flight attendants from foreign countries including Japan, South Korea and India. It is planning to recruit more attendants from Russia and the Philippines.

Beijing, May 30 (PTI) – China Eastern Airlines, the only Chinese airline that operates a direct flight to India, will deploy Indian nationals as air hostess for the first time on its Beijing-Shanghai-New Delhi flight from June 3, the company announced today.

China Eastern, based in the eastern Chinese metropolis, Shanghai, announced that 16 Indian women had completed professional training as air stewardesses and would begin to work on the Beijing-Shanghai-New Delhi route.

Interview the reporter:

The 16 air hostesses are currently under training in Eastern Airlines, and they will work on the flights at least one or two years, I suppose.

Most Indians welcome such exchanges, as more and more Indian people are visiting China.

In particular, this year is the India-China Friendship Year'. I understand there are many cultural and business exchanges to come. Bollywood will send many famous actors, actresses, directors and films to China in the coming months. Many performing artists are also due to come.



India and China need to know each other better, as we are the two big countries in Asia. Our defense minister is in China this week, and has agreed a number of MOUs for more military joint practices.

I'm personally also doing some exchange programs. My purpose is to let more Indian people to know more about China. I'll keep on doing that.

— Anil K. Joseph, journalist, PTI Beijing

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www.hotelkunlun.com

China says to withdraw from currency market

Beijing, May 31 (Bloomberg) – China's central bank said it will stop meddling in the country's currency market.

"The frequency and strength of the central bank's open market currency operations will gradually weaken and be phased out,"

the People's Bank of China said in its quarterly monetary policy report.

The Chinese yuan has climbed up 1.1 percent since the country ended a peg to the US currency on July 21.

The US Treasury Department

stopped short this month of labeling China a currency manipulator in a twice yearly review, prompting criticism from lawmakers who are sponsoring legislation that may lead to sanctions unless the yuan is allowed to advance faster.

"The rate of yuan appreciation is likely to pick up in 2006," said Duncan Innes-Ker at the Economist Intelligence Unit in London. "It makes a lot of sense to allow the currency to rise and encourage more reliance on the domestic market."

Bank of China shares rise

Hong Kong, June 1 (Bloomberg) – Shares of Bank of China rose on their first day of trading in Hong Kong after investors ordered about 17 times the stock on offer during its US\$9.73 billion initial public offering.

The shares were up 14 percent to HK\$3.375 at 2:21 pm in Hong Kong, compared with the IPO price of HK\$2.95.

The gain gives the bank a market value of \$105.4 billion, making it the eighth biggest in the world.

"There's no selling pressure because institutional investors are still accumulating," said Winson Fong, who helps manage US\$2 billion at SG Asset Management Ltd. in Singapore and bought shares of Bank of China.

Appetite for Chinese bank shares will be tested again this year because Industrial & Commercial Bank of China plans to sell as much as US\$12 billion in stock.

China Construction Bank and Bank of Communications have handed shareholders HK\$41 billion (US\$5.28 billion) in gains since raising HK\$89 billion in stock sales last year.



China is emerging as a producer of low-cost vehicles.
(Reuters Photo)

Plans to curb auto overcapacity

Beijing, May 31 (Reuters) – China is planning to introduce new measures to rein in overcapacity in the automobile sector, state media yesterday cited regulatory officials as saying.

If an automaker's sales do not meet 80% of its capacity, the government will not let it build another plant in a city where it is not already operating, the official *China Daily* cited unnamed sources with the National Development and Reform Commission, the top planning body, as saying.

Further, all new automobile producers would be required to produce local brand vehicles, it cited the sources as saying, and those already producing vehicles would have to include local brands in any new product categories they start making.

The paper cited one official as saying that the rule on building local-brand vehicles would also apply to joint ventures.

That policy required the total investment in any new vehicle project in China to be worth at least 2 billion yuan (US\$249mil), including at least 500mil yuan spent on research and development.

China Life, Taikang to invest overseas

Shanghai, June 1 (Reuters) – Chinese approved the country's top life insurer China Life and smaller Taikang Life to buy foreign exchange in overseas market within a given quota.

In April, China's domestic insurers and banks were given the nod to invest in overseas capital markets through the Qualified Domestic Institutional Investor (QDII) program.

Citic hires bankers for IPO

May 26 (Bloomberg) – China Citic Bank, the nation's seventh-largest lender, hired securities firms including Citigroup Inc. and HSBC Holdings Plc to help sell as much as US\$2 billion of stock in Hong Kong.

China Citic, based in Beijing, also retained Lehman Brothers Holdings Inc., China International Capital Corp. and Citic Securities Co.. JPMorgan Chase & Co. was hired as financial adviser.

GE invests US\$50M in a cleaner China

Beijing, May 29 (AP) – General Electric Co. said it will invest up to US\$50 million in China to develop nonpolluting technologies.

GE said products already being sold in China with advanced environmental technologies include more fuel efficient engines and railway locomotives, water-saving irrigation systems and more easily recycled plastics.



GE chairman and CEO Jeff Immelt at a news conference in Beijing May 29.
(Reuters Photo)

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Australian climber Lincoln Hall smiling safe back at the Advance Base Camp at 6,400 meters (20,800 feet) last week on Mount Everest. Fifty-year-old Hall collapsed near the summit of Everest.

CFP Photo

Ethics debate as Everest climbing season sees record death toll

By Chu Meng

An Australian climber who came close to death on Everest (Qomolangma) was in amazing health considering his ordeal, his doctor said Monday.

Lincoln Hall, 50, was last Thursday left for dead by climbing companions after becoming disoriented by acute altitude sickness on his descent from the summit of Everest. An American mountaineer found him alive the next day, and Hall was finally rescued by the China Tibetan Mountaineering Team.

High death toll

This was the latest incident in the busy May climbing season on the world's highest peak. Hall was luckier than many other climbers; to date this year, ten have lost their lives attempting the summit, making this climbing season's death toll the highest on record. Five people died in a single week between May 15 and 22.

Another tragic story was the talk of the crowded tent city that is the Everest base camp, and soon became known further afield: a British mountaineer desperate for oxygen had collapsed along a well-traveled route to the summit. Dozens walked right past him, unwilling to risk their own ascents. Within hours, David Sharp, 34,

was dead.

The tale shocked many, an apparent display of callousness and lack of basic morals. It seemed horrifying that other climbers could leave a man to die unaided. About 40 people are thought to have walked past Sharp as he sat cross-legged in a shallow snow cave. The few who did stop said he was so near death there was nothing that could be done.

The small community of modern high-altitude mountaineers barely registered any surprise at the news, however. "We've been seeing things like this for a very long time," said Thomas Sjogren, a Swedish mountaineer who helps run climber's Internet forum 'Explorers Web'.

Commercial expeditions

Zhang Mingxing, the secretary of China Tibetan Mountaineering Team said, "At present, we are the only organization that mounts rescue missions in that area. However, under such extreme conditions, our small team can hardly cover every incident in time. We need to establish a system or principles among mountaineers from different countries where they provide their own rescue services."

Zhang added that many of today's Everest climbers are on commercial expeditions, some paying tens of thou-

sands of dollars to guides who are under fierce pressure to get their clients to the summit.

No place for ethics

"It is unfair," said Lydia Bradley, a New Zealander who in 1988 became the first woman to reach the summit of Everest. "It is a world not meant for people at all, where oxygen levels are a fraction of what they are at sea level, temperatures can drop to 100 degrees below zero, and winds can blow with the force of a gale. The area above about 26,000 feet is referred to as the death zone."

Bradley said that at those altitudes, a combination of exhaustion and low oxygen can affect the judgment of even the best climbers. It can be a case of choosing between jeopardizing a once-in-a-lifetime investment to help a dying person.

The team of New Zealander Mark Inglis, which passed Sharp, said he appeared unprepared for his solo climb to the summit, with inadequate oxygen supplies. Inglis said that at 27,887 feet it is extremely difficult to keep yourself alive, let alone keep anyone else alive. There was nothing they could do to help, because Sharp had no oxygen, no proper gloves, and lacked other vital equipment and supplies.

Crash: how China's roads became the world's most deadly

By Gareth George

On the evening of May 11, 2004 comic actor Niu Zhenhua - steaming drunk - left a party in Beijing and turned the ignition of his Mercedes sedan. Around 11pm Niu, star of movies like *Stand up, Don't bend over*, ploughed his lurching car into a five-ton truck and was thrown 50 feet backwards. Witnesses claimed that Niu seemed to have fallen asleep at the wheel. The truck's rear axle was broken. Niu, just two weeks past his 49th birthday, was dead.

While Niu Zhenhua's final journey generated column inches, most similar incidents that year didn't. In fact, Reuters figures claim there were nearly 107,000 people killed on China's roads in 2004, making them the world's most lethal. Reuters blamed 'skyrocketing car demand, poor roads and bad driving'. Things aren't improving. United Nations figures (and those of several major US insurance companies) claim that China has 3 percent of the world's cars and 17 percent of the world's road deaths.

As a regular part of morning rush hour's choking traffic ooze, 'Taxi Driver 224705' doesn't believe that Beijing's roads are particularly dangerous. "I read in the newspapers about deaths, and perhaps Beijingers need to be more kind to each other and follow the rules, but it's not too bad." He will admit that he sees far more accidents today than he did at the beginning of his 11 year career. "Probably because there are more cars though..." He's right. A lot more.

China entered the World Trade Organization in 2001, hoping the pressure it would put on the domestic car industry would spur it to a competitive level. In 2002 and 2003 there was a 40 percent year on year increase in car production, and enough eager punters ready to stump up the yuan to accommodate it. While the production and the punters have tailed off, the market is still exploding. And every car sold needs a driver to fill it.

Zhang Yonghe is a driving instructor with Changjian driving school. He says that after 10 days of four to six hours driving, or 58 hours driving experience, you can apply for your test. Most - almost all - of this time is spent in a car park away from the congestion, learning to turn, practicing reversing.

There are three steps to getting a Chinese driving license. "First, a multiple choice regulations test. You have 90 minutes to complete it and must achieve a score of 90 percent or more. Some people complete it in as little as 10 minutes. Then you are tested on what you have learned in your lessons: turning left and right, driving in a car park. This can be completed in as little as two to three minutes." Only then need the prospective speed demon get on the real roads. And even then, it might be for as little as five or six minutes.

Still, Zhang thinks this is adequate, although he admits that not everyone can apply what they learn. "We have learners aged between 17 and 60. Everyone is different." Journalist Alice, who learned to drive on Beijing's roads, goes further, "You can't apply what you

learn in driving school to real life. If you tried, you'd just get cut off by everyone."

Zhang thinks the problem lies elsewhere. "I'm not sure how many people on Beijing's roads have never learned to drive, but you can spot them. And some people pay for licenses."

Yvonne Gerig, who has lived in Beijing for 11 years, has been shocked by Chinese colleagues' desire to purchase their licenses rather than earn them. "I've heard them talk about 2,500 yuan for a license. There seems little understanding of the dangers of driving, especially with children."

While the government has tried to raise awareness with some brutal posters and TV footage of accidents, it seems the message has been slow to filter down. And official accident statistics were closely guarded by staff at several hospitals, including Beijing Jishuitan and Peking University Third Hospital.

Understandably a myriad of unconnected issues make it difficult to change things over night, but Peter Droege, who helps the government with environment, is surprisingly optimistic. "My guess is that [poor driving conditions are caused by] the lack of training, an absence of discipline in examinations and lax enforcement or untrained enforcers. My sense is that this will get better over time. That said, there may be deeper cultural issues - a sense of stubborn collective where all have equal rights or a tangible sense of market liberalization where everything goes could have extended into behavior."



Where does your city fall on the safest-drivers list?

By Patrick Cooper (USA Today)

Allstate Insurance researchers have found Sioux Falls, S.D., has the safest drivers in America, with the motorists averaging 14.3 years between accidents.

Sioux Falls' daily, the *Argus Leader*, files a brief on the win and the celebratory free gas Allstate plans to give away there today. "The Sioux Falls Police Department will be on hand to control the anticipated influx of traffic caused by the offer," a spokesman tells the paper. Safety first.

How does your city compare to Sioux Falls? An Allstate press release has charts of the safest motorist cities at different population levels.

Comments:

OK, let me get this straight. Allstate probably spent tens of thousands of dollars and manpower on research to determine the following: the safest drivers are located in small cities that have fewer cars, less congestion, less construction, and fewer distractions. Wow! I look forward to the next Allstate study with a headline like "Link Discovered Between Temperature and Heat" or "Water is Wet".

— JK

Is it any wonder Sioux Falls is number one? They never have more than two cars on the road on any given day.

— wmseitz

Speaking as an occasional visitor to Sioux Falls several times each year, I would like to point out that if Sioux Falls is relatively safe to drive in – and to be sure, it is indeed that – it is also VERY large geographically. And what you don't pay for in gas waiting in a line of stop-and-go cars, you do pay for in gas simply getting anywhere.

I am always astounded by my friends that live close by in Valley Springs, in that a simple grocery store run or drug store run can be a 50-mile round trip, and they seem to think nothing of performing trips like this on a daily, regular basis!

— Joe

All of our cities/suburbs big enough to make the top 200 are near the bottom of the list as most dangerous...pretty scary.

— Jeff

Not sure how the safest drivers can be in Phoenix when Phoenix is also the worst city in the USA for red light runners. I live within a mile of the worst red light runner intersection of all and see accidents there almost daily.

— Rick in PHX

Minneapolis at 53 & St. Paul at 54? If you were to look at it and remove all the people that moved here from Chicago, I bet we would jump up to the top 10. Sorry, but a fact is a fact!!

— Minnesota Boy

I think it's pretty safe to say that any city in Texas is NOT on the list at all.....

— Terry Archibald,
SSgt USMC (Ret.)

I'm sure that's due in large part to the wide use of the public transportation system, but it's shocking that NYC isn't worse. Anybody who has driven with A NYC cabbie will agree.

— Ryan

Finally, something that confirms that the drivers in Las Vegas are horrible. Every time you turn on the news you hear about a driving related death. People here are crazy. I just want to know how to make it safer for the sane people on the road.

— Steve

Ban on Internet gambling considered

By Patrick Cooper (USA Today)

The House Judiciary Committee begins looking today at a bill that would ban most Internet gambling, the *Washington Post* reports. "The bill would update the Federal Wire Wager Act, which prohibits gambling over telephone lines but may not apply to Internet gambling because not all Web traffic travels over phone lines," the paper notes. "It also would force banks to block transactions related to online gambling and would empower law enforcement agencies to force Internet service providers to remove or disable links to gambling sites."

But the bills aren't arriving without substantial opposition. As Bloomberg reported earlier this week, "MGM Mirage,

Harrah's Entertainment and other U.S. casino operators are increasing pressure on Congress to consider legalizing online gambling – at the same time that lawmakers are seeking to tighten criminal penalties for it."

But let's discuss. Where do you fall on the bill? (And what odds do you give it?)

Comments:

The State lotteries and scratch off games do a lot more damage than online gaming.

— Dave Starts

Congress can pass a zillion laws about this...but the fact is, no one can stop it! Gamble if you must....but don't come crying when you lose.

— DC

Gambling is a sin. All you sinners are going to burn in a fiery abyss. Yay god!

— Evangelist FTR

I am disabled and restricted to the house. The only thing that has saved my sanity is being able to play online poker every day. It happens to be a prescription written by my doctor.....

— c.hill

Politicians should realize that, as was done with cigarettes, the best thing to do is to keep it legal and tax the hell out of it.

— Dwight

For US\$10 to US\$20 one can play in a poker tournament for three to four hours if they are half way intelligent, and who really cares if they win. IT'S ENTERTAINMENT.. AND YOU DO AT LEAST HAVE A CHANCE TO

WIN, NOT LIKE THE LOTTERY, USUALLY 175,000,000 TO 1.

— Confususs

US\$100 bucks says it will not pass...

— Innocent Bystander

I'd not have a problem with it if it were able to be strictly enforceable to disallow underage gambling. Unfortunately, it is their choice, but a teenager is generally not mature enough to make completely responsible decisions.

— Underage concerns

I am sure there are many other things that congress can do such as fix this trade deficit, or work to clean up America's image abroad.

— Steelktm

We need LESS government, not more. What happened to the

good old days of American Freedom??

— Give me Liberty!

Kids gambling online is wrong, however, this is not the fault of the site. It is the parents job to teach responsibility, right from wrong, etc.. "Not the Politicians"

— Terry L

Don't actually think that lawmakers have any intention of banning online gambling. It's only an avenue where they can potentially accept illegal bribes from the companies gaining from their vote. It's all about the \$\$\$\$\$

— wvpokerplayer

Even if the US government bans online gambling, there are plenty of sites around the world that are more than willing to take your business.

— liz

Weekly topics

Newsweek (USA)

- What's wrong with the Democrats?
- Can Paulson turn the tide for Bush?
- If not Hillary, then who?
- Responding to the Indonesian quake
- Immigration Bill's hidden costs

The New York Times (USA)

- US is sending reserve troops to Iraq's west
- Two at CBS News die in Baghdad on bloody day
- Talk of Pelosi as Speaker delights both parties
- Take this internship and shove it
- Who's that masked man and where did he learn to wrestle like that?

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

- Family stunned by mistaken identity
- Pest topping made diner's skin crawl
- See-through walls and tight T's not to everyone's taste
- Scandal of missing still-born Angelina
- Aussie's accused killer on trial

Daily Telegraph (UK)

- Firefox snaps at Microsoft's heels
- Bible supports homosexual partnerships, says bishop
- Brave student had heart set on Sandhurst
- Croquet-playing Prescott faces clamour to resign
- US scientists back autism link to MMR

Toronto Star (Canada)

- Oliver! worthy of exclamation
- Talent, tragedy fuel Ottey
- Tornado watch for Brampton, Mississauga
- Pay disabled \$6M
- Testing probed at Fern Ave. school

(By Jiang Xubo)



By Annie Wei

The Magic Hospital will run a 'T-Shirt Day' Saturday for sick, neglected, orphaned and abused children at a number of orphanages, migrant schools, shelters and hospitals.

This event will be the first of its kind to be held in China through Magic Hospital, founded in China in 2003. The Magic Hospital is a non-profit organization, set up in the belief that the best gift to a child is time, fun and self-confidence. They foster the well-being of underprivileged children mainly by designing and implementing fun activities and interactive workshops to serve as support tools for the physical, psychological and emotional healing process. Bringing in a clowns culture is Magic Hospital's department.

The 'T-shirt Day' will be held in 11 different locations, including Beida Yiyuan, Ertong Yiyuan, Yuying migrant school, Guang Ai migrant school, Green Garden migrant school, Wisdom Springs, Street Children Protection Center, Stars & Rain Education Institute for Autistic, Blue Sky Healing Home, The Village of Sun and Langfang Children's Village.

Around 1,500 children from these orphanages, hospitals, migrant schools and shelters will take part in the event and



Workers in Magic Hospital with sick children

Photos provided by Magic Hospital

will be given a Magic Box. Over 70 volunteers and a class of students from Beijing BISS International School will help at the site. The box contains a blank T-shirt and pens that allow them to paint their designs.

"It will be a great, fun afternoon and a nice memory," said Magda

The, from Magic Hospital, "and we hope we can do it every year."

After the T-shirt day, Magic Hospital will also hold a photography exhibition in the Art Studio in Dashanzi 798 Art District in June. They will display photos of some of the T-shirts, and of kids working with the volunteers.

For people who want to help, contact: Hannah (English) at hannah_oussedik@hotmail.com; or

Flora (English/Chinese) at espritdefleura@gmail.com.

For more information go to the Magic Hospital's website: www.magichospital.org

Frontline photographers give master class

By Sarah Liang/Annie Wei

Two World Press Photo award winners – Robert Knoth and Daniel Beltra – gave a master class at the Beijing Film Academy last Sunday.

The seminar, called 'on the frontline', was organized by Greenpeace China. It was attended by more than 200 people, mainly picture editors, photographers and journalists from the media, as well as university students.

Robert Knoth, who has spent seven years on Russian nuclear stories, found the best way to take a good picture is to "make people forget your presence [as a photographer]." And Daniel Beltra has shared with the audience his career path from a photojournalist to a freelancer. Apart from Amazon drought pictures, Beltra has snapped more polar bears than almost anyone else.

The two were on a Greenpeace mission shooting the World Press Reward Photos. Beltra finished shooting in the Amazon just last week. The audience were very interested in how they faced the danger while carrying on the mission. They both agree that photography is only a tool to send the message, which is otherwise buried or hidden from public attention. To get the best shot, Beltra has spent more than 2,000 hours in helicopters and two years in a boat (non-consecutively, one assumes).

Knoth, who used to be a rock singer and portrait photographer, said he was interested in history and politics, and that was why he took his camera into war zones. He's even visited Chernobyl, site of the famous nuclear accident 20 years ago.

He said, "There are many nuclear accidents in Russia the world doesn't know about. What I want to show with my pictures is that Chernobyl is far from being an isolated incident, and I will strive to bring the victims to light. And now people are starting to talk about it, this is a good sign."

In order to publicize the message, Knoth's mysterious images have traveled in Europe, north and South America, the Middle East and India, and his book has been translated into four languages.

"It was indeed a rewarding experience for me, even though I was not a real photographer myself," said Miss Zhang, from a governmental agency, "The cracking dry land shown in Daniel's photos cannot possibly be the Amazon had I not seen it with my own eyes. And those calm faces of the Chernobyl victims are really shocking!"

Lester Brown tells his plans in Beijing

By Wang Xiaoyuan

The American author, Lester Brown, founder of the Worldwatch Institute and head of the Earth Policy Institute, made a special appearance in Beijing Bookworm on Tuesday evening to discuss his new book *Plan B: Rescuing a Planet Under Stress and a Civilization in Trouble*.

Brown visited China to attend the launch of the Chinese edition of Plan B. He has also given lectures at the National Library, Institute of

World Development and Tsinghua University. He had just finished a book signing at Xidan Bookstore before.

Brown wrote the book in 2003. In it he mentioned many problems in China which affect the rest of world: the setback of food production, water shortage, bubble economics and so on. He said, "Plan a-business as usual – is not working. It is creating a bubble economy. Plan B describes how to deflate the economic bubble before it

bursts. This involves, for example, reducing the demand for water to the sustainable yield of aquifers by quickly raising water productivity and accelerating the shift to smaller families. With most of the nearly 3 billion people to be added by 2050 to be born in countries already facing water shortages, pressure on water supplies will mount. If population is not stabilized soon, the water situation in some countries could become unmanageable."

The audience attending the lecture included Brown's readers, students and many Chinese environmental scholars from the Chinese Economics Society.

Brown is an advisor on ecological study around the world. He has published 50 books and is one of the most widely published authors. In May 2001, he founded the Earth Policy Institute to provide a vision and a road map for achieving an environmentally sustainable economy.

German Children's Theater will storm the stage for Beijing youngsters

By Chu Meng

As Children's Day is approaching, the Hamburg Children's Theater, the oldest children's theater in Germany, will present *The Little Mozart*, a multimedia musical in Beijing, to celebrate the 250th birthday of Mozart. This will be the second time the theater has visited China, after the success of the Magic Flute in 2004.

Combining the elements of opera, theater and symphony, and supported by rich multimedia, the show reveals the magic music world of little Mozart.

The Little Mozart tells his own story and of his love for music. Many classical pieces like the *Magic Flute* and *Pachelbel's Canon* can be enjoyed in the performance. The theater also invites a Chinese teacher to help the young audience understand the classic works.

They will perform another children's play, the *Baby*, which will be shown on June 1 at the Tianqiao theater, explores the inner world of children. Ding Fang, the hero in the play, has a puppy. But the puppy runs into

blind man Liang's home, letting out Liang's pet birds and breaking his jade jar. Scolded and beaten by his father, the little boy then runs away from home but on his way decides to help the blind man and begins to train the puppy into a guide-dog.

Focusing on the communication difficulties between adults and children, the play vividly reveals the loneliness of childhood, the longing for nature of city children, the heavy burden of their study, and the generation gap between children and their parents.

The Hamburg Children's Theater
Photo provided by Hamburg Children's Theater

A day in a vineyard

By Annie Wei

Think you have a cultured palate? Last weekend, at the Sino-France Demonstration Vineyard on the way to Badaling, was all about wine tasting. It was the first 'Fete de la Fleur' in Beijing.

"In France and most wine regions, the vine bud breaking is celebrated to honor the safe development of the vine," said Xavier Tondusson, French associate director from Bacchus wines. Every year, in most wine regions, the flower blossom festival is the first celebration of the vine and wine, Tondusson said.

To share the spirit of joy and passion for wines, Tondusson and Helen Lou, a Chinese Bacchus employee, organized the vineyard tour for their club members.

The vineyard is a joint-ven-

ture agriculture project between China and France governments. After five years in construction, it has turned from a waste land into well-managed farm, with a modern-designed factory surrounded by mountains.

The event attracted 20 wine lovers, including Pierre Courdurié, export manager from Domaines-lapalu, a well-known vineyard in Begadan France, two people from Germany who were brought in by their friend Yu Dan, PR manager for Audi. Lu Jiang, who runs his own wine-consulting company and Zhang Yuting, freelancing interpreter for the UN were also wine fans who got an invite.

It was Courdurié's first time at the vineyard. Standing next to the vines, Courdurié and Frankie Zhao, a local wine expert were

talking about the plants, management rules and climate differences, which all affect the quality of the grapes and the wines that are going to be made.

Wines tasted at the event included De Neuville Chemin Blanc, Vin du Jardin de la France 2004, St Cosme Cotes du Rhone Blanc AOC 2004, Domaine de la Roche, Coteaux du Layon AOC 2004, De Neuville Merlot, Vin du Jardin de la France 2004, De Neuville Carbernet Sauvignon, Vin du Jardin de la France 2004, Cuateau Mauperey, Cotes de Castillon AOC 2003. While tasting, Courdurié introduced his wine. Pretty soon, people were chatting and mingling. Wine has a way of doing that.

Li Demei, chief wine-maker of Sino-France Demonstration Vine-

yard brought in his two guests, Armand Cottin, president of Laboue-Roi, a famous wine maker from Bourgogne and his wife.

They just finished Vinexpo Asia-Pacific 2006 in Hong Kong. The Vinexpo, an international wines and sports trade fair for professional visitors in the area is a subsidiary of Vinexpo SAS, which has organized the most important biennial international trade event, Vinexpo, in Bordeaux (France) every other year since 1981. The event claimed that China was recognized as a key player in the international wine and spirits market.

"The potential of the wine market in China is really huge," Helen Lou said. She plans to organize wine events from time to time, "for both expatriate and local wine lovers."

Enjoying a French way of life

By Han Manman

Ah, the French way of life. Those creamy sauces, the constant reek of garlic and vin rouge and the opportunity to torture geese. Bliss. If it wasn't half way round the world. So thank 'Dieu' for 'Aperitif a la Francaise'.

Around the theme of 'When East meets West', the annual event held yesterday in Dong Yuan Theater involved live cooking and cocktail demonstrations by a French chef, a professional music group and a fashion show were held along with a French buffet dinner.

'Aperitif a la Francaise', a unique worldwide event, brings together people from all different parts of the world to enjoy a French cocktail evening party, in a symbolic place, every first Thursday in June. The aim is to extend this friendly tradition and please French food and wine lovers across the world.

'Aperitif' is a French word means 'open one's appetite before dinner'. In real life, people gather in a comfortable and friendly atmosphere to enjoy a drink and nibble some cocktail dishes like baguettes, goose liver pate, cheese and fresh vegetables, olives, charcuteries and so on.

Last year, the typical French friendly cocktail was celebrated in 21 countries and 31 cities.



Svenhelge with workers and a policeman

This is how Zongzi is made

By Wang Xiaoyuan

Spavonhagen Wolfgang Svenhelge, from Germany, is learning how to make a Zongzi (special dumpling for Dragon Boat Festival, May 5 in the luna calendar and May 31). This Monday, the residents of Tuanjiehu Yi Er Tiao Community invited international friends to join the Zongzi making to celebrate the festival. Policemen of that community were also the guests there. Tuanjiehu community has held several events to involve international residents in Chinese traditional fun this year.

Photo provided by Tuanjiehu Yi Er Tiao Community



Free French flics

By Wang Xiaoyuan

Films by some of France's best-known directors will be shown at the French Documentary Festival from today (Friday).

The free outdoor film festival will be held at the Xidan Cultural Plaza until tomorrow.

Designers offered trip to London

By Lucky Zhang

Up-and-coming designers are being given the chance to win a once-in-a-lifetime trip to London to show off their creations.

Anyone aged between 25 and 35 who works in an area of design can apply for the International Young Designer Entrepreneur of the Year (IYDEY) 2006 Awards being held by British Council.

Applicants, who can be anyone from architects to interior designers, are required to have good conversational English and will be asked to make a presentation of their work in front of a panel of expert judges.

The winner will get an all-expenses-paid trip to London in September and a place at 100% Design, the city's international trade fair for furniture and interiors.

Application forms are available from the British Council offices or its official website. Candidates are required to send their application forms to IYDEY@britishcouncil.org.cn before June 30. They can also attach their CVs and photos of their work.

It is the second time the British Council has held the IYDEY award program.

Japanese film festival

By Han Manman

The Japanese Embassy is holding a film festival this month to promote their movie making skills in China.

A selection of films, many selected from the 1990s, will be shown during the festival. The movies of famous Japanese director Shusuke-Kaneko are expected to be the highlight.

Anyone who wants to attend should bring a passport-sized photo and ID card.

The festival will be held at the Multi-Function Hall in the first floor of the Embassy of Japan between 2pm and 4pm every Thursday of the second and fourth week of the month.

It will include over 30 documentaries by top directors including Joris Ivens, Pierre Chenal, Alain Resnais, Georges Franju. The three themes for the exhibition are Film and Painting, *Paris and Its Outskirts, Other Provinces and Other Countries, Politics and War and Individual*

and Society.

The festival is a part of 'Vision World', an international event organized by the French West and East Cultural Promotion Association. In the second half of this year, Chinese documentaries will be shown in France.

Outdoor films will be shown in Xidan from June 2nd and 3rd. The films shown in the first day will be all about Paris. Other works are being screened at the China Film Archive Cinema until June 18th. Tickets are 30 yuan per person. All the films are in French with Chinese subtitles.

Italians stage PR spectacular

By Chen Shasha

Italian businesses took marketing to a new level on Saturday – when they took to the stage to promote their products in China.

The enterprises, which included an underwear designer and a gym equipment supplier, put on performances at an 'Italy on the Stage' gala dinner held by the China Italy Chamber of Commerce, part of Italy in China Year.

"Since the Renaissance, Italy has been known as a country full of innovation," said the Italian

ambassador.

At dinner, 'Technogym', which claims to be one of the world's three top suppliers of fitness appliances, put on a show about the Italian life-style to promote one of its newly-designed exercise machines.

There was also a performance by underwear makers 'La Perla', who showed off their fashion line for the summer with skimpily clad models on the catwalk.

A top Italian chef who prepared food for dignitaries and sports stars at the Torino 2006 Winter Olympics cooked

dinner.

It is the third time the Italians have held a dinner gala to promote their economic interests in China. The theme of this year's event was tradition, modernity and creativity.



Light performance



Italy uncovered – an underwear performance by 'La Perla'

Photos provided by China Italian Chamber of Commerce

Holland and Malaysia battle it out in Hiboo Cup

By Wang Xiaoyuan

The third round of the Hiboo International Cup came close to being a washout on Saturday when a storm hit the capital. Three games had to be postponed until tomorrow (June 3). The only excitement was the game between Holland and Malaysia on Sunday.

The two teams, who had failed at the elimination stage of the competition, were fighting for honor in their last Hiboo Cup game. And it was a real battle – Holland had 25 shots on goal and Malaysia had 11. The referee handed out four yellow cards – the highest number of cards dished out during the competi-

tion so far. The two teams finally drew the game at 3-3.

When the Hiboo Cup comes to a close later this month, the Hiboo Football Association will be founded for international fans and players. Staff are trying to come up with a slogan for the association and have asked Beijing's footie fans for suggestions.

Peruvian food festival

By Han Manman

A Peruvian food festival kicked off at the Great Wall Sheraton Hotel on Tuesday.

Two top Peruvian chefs have been invited to Beijing by the Peruvian embassy to whip up a gastronomic feast of traditional Peruvian cuisine. They will be offering up mouth-watering Peruvian dishes until June 5. For more information call 65905566 ext 2117.

A French invasion

By Han Manman

One hundred French students descended on Beijing today (Friday) to learn about the city and Chinese culture.

The delegation is part of the largest ever youth exchange between France and China.

More than 400 French citizens, aged 18 to 35, will come to China from June 1 to November 30 as part of the scheme, which has been organized by the French Embassy in Beijing. They will include artists, entrepreneurs, scientists and political leaders. The same number of young Chinese will go to France next year at the invitation of the French government.

Each French group will visit three or four major Chinese cities including; Beijing, Shanghai, Hangzhou and Wuhan.

Piano festival in the Forbidden City

By Han Manman

A French piano festival will kick off in the Forbidden City tonight (Friday).

The 'French Piano aux Jacobins Festival' will run until Sunday and include three shows from award-winning pianists.

Alexandre Paley, who won the Bach Piano Competition and the Bulgarian Plancho Vidigerov International Competition, will perform tonight followed by Bertrand Chamyou, winner of the Long-Thibaud International Competition.

Award-winning Jazz pianist, Yaron Herman, who scooped the Rimon Young Wit Award, will play on Sunday.

The 'French Piano aux Jacobins Festival' started in Toulouse in 1979 and has since become one of the most popular piano festivals in southern France. It will be held at the Forbidden City Concert Hall from 7:30pm tonight until June 4.



Laura Du (left) and Tiffany Zhao

Photo provided by ISB

Cash-strapped school saved by teenagers

By Tom Mackenzie

Two kind-hearted teenagers have temporarily saved a cash-strapped primary school from closure – after organizing a benefit rock concert.

Laura Du and Tiffany Zhao, both 13 and students at the International School of Beijing (ISB), decided to take matters into their own hands when they heard about the plight of Jingtang Primary School, in Sichuan province.

It had its funding cut earlier this year and parents – most of them peasants – cannot afford to pay teachers and staff to keep the school running.

"The local mayor told my mother about the school and when I heard I wanted to do something to help," said Laura.

She teamed up with Tiffany and the pair set about organizing a rock

concert at their school to raise cash for the stricken primary.

The Great Gig in the Sky showcased the talents of three bands made up of ISB middle school musicians and was held at the school theatre on May 5. More than 200 students flocked to the event helping to raise over 2,300 yuan for the school.

"We heard that other schools around Jingtang had already closed down so we were desperate to stop the same thing happening to this one," said Laura. "The school gives pupils a primary education so they can find better jobs and improve their lives. It gives them a chance to escape poverty."

Tiffany added, "Education is so important but these kids would have no education without money for the school."

One of the girl's teachers,

Amanda Murphy, who helped them organize the concert, said she was "incredibly" proud that her students had taken the initiative to help save the school.

"We were thrilled when the girl's came up with this idea," she said. "We do a subject at school called 'global awareness' where we look at lots of issues affecting people across the world and I think they felt motivated by that. It's dismal that this school could be forced to close, it's a very sad state of affairs but I'm incredibly proud of Laura and Tiffany for what they have done. We're really a very privileged group of people at this school living in a country where some have a very tough time, so it's essential that we do our bit."

The concert was the first event either of the girls has ever orga-

nized. But it was such a success they are planning on more. They hope to visit Jingtang Primary in the near future to meet the children there and see how the money has been spent.

"Hopefully it will be the first of many," said Tiffany. "We want to get down to see the school and are trying to organize a visit. It would be great to meet the kids there and see if our money has been of any help."

Beijing's international schools hold numerous fundraising events throughout the school year for local charities and schools.

ISB raises tens of thousands of yuan every year for the nearby Lunfang orphanage.

Dulwich College has raised over 42,000 yuan for The Bethel Foster Home since the start of the school year.

Pupils protect paraplegic poodles

By Chen Shasha

Students from the International School of Beijing (ISB) will try to help injured and abandoned dogs tomorrow (Sunday).

Pupils from the 'Roots and Shoots' group are going on a

field trip to the Beijing Dog Shelter in Beijing Human and Animal Environmental Education Center where they will hand out donated dog food.

The Center is Beijing's first non-profit, privately run animal shelter. It is home to more

than 300 dogs, eight of which suffer severe paralysis in their hindquarters due to disease or injury.

"In the beginning of the disease, if they get medical treatment in time, they will recover very easily," said center volun-

teer Mary Xue. "Unfortunately, their owners chose to discard them and it's too late to cure them. That's why some cannot walk again."

To help the abandoned dogs, students of ISB put out donation boxes around the school.

Tot rockers - school sets up band for babies

By Jiang Xubo

Moms and dads will be able to put their children's music abilities to the test next Monday - when a 'Baby Music Band' is held at Eton International School (EIS).

Children will be able to improve their auditory stimulation by playing maracas, triangles, tambourines, and drums.

The activity, a special section of the Mommy & Me program run by EIS, will be held from 2:45pm to 3:45pm. Babies, aged from naught to 18 months, are welcome.

Carla Ortiz, art director from the EIS, will be there to offer her help.

The activity is free but parents will need to register in advance. For more information call 6539 8967 or send an email to psadmin@etonkids.com for registration.

Cooking up a charity treat

By Jiang Xubo

Five students from the International Academy of Beijing (IAB) raised cash for charity yesterday at the 'Cuisine for a Cause' cooking contest held at the Holiday Inn Temple of Heaven Beijing.

The students, who are from grades one to five, come from different countries including India, the US, South Korea, and New Zealand. They helped the cooks at the hotel whip up dishes from their home countries.

They also presented household items and stationery at the event as gifts for Beijing Sun Village Research Institute for Helping Special Children.

Tim McDonald, Headmaster of IAB, was one of the judges at the event.

Nine-year-old skating star

By Jiang Xubo

Sarah Paw, a nine-year-old student from Yew Chung International School of Beijing (YCISB), has made Singapore's national figure skating team for the 2006 to 2007 season.

Sarah – originally from Singapore – made the team after winning Singapore's Nationals last year.

"Sarah is a talented athlete who always works hard. She is very fit and competitive. These are the characteristics I see in Sarah at school. I imagine she is this and much more on the ice," said Marika Depoorter, Physical Education and Athletics Coordinator from YCISB.

The Seoul patrol

By Annie Wei

The new Beijing branch of South Korean gallery chain Arario held two art events last Saturday, one for Thomas Ruff's exhibition, and another called 'Move on Asia.' Large numbers of Beijing's South Korean community turned up for both events.

Cotemplating art



Lan Marr (left)



Lan Marr (left)



Tal Hadad from Paris (left) and Jobs, music producer



Kim Tae-Jung (right), Yang Ji Yong (middle) and Choi Soo-Young



Jens Cristensen (left) and Joseph, student of digital media



Artists talk shop



Photos by Blinking

Not just out for a quick buck

By Jiang Xubo

"You know Women's Street? My school is right there," 28-year-old Jake Cooke from Canada said on the telephone. But actually it sounded more like 'Niuren', which means 'people with power,' an ironic slip up with the Chinese name.

Community

Entering the gate of Xianguangli, a community opposite Women's Street in Chaoyang District, following the zigzag path sided with trees to its end, you finally reach the International Language Training Center (ILTC), Jake's school, in a dark-red building located in a corner of the compound.

"We want to be part of the community," said Jake, "Giving the school a sense of community gives it that feeling of 'home', this is an excellent environment to learn and make studying effective and enjoyable. And you know, prices for renting offices here are more reasonable," he added, laughing.

Xianguangli is a community built in the 1980s. Dozens of old-fashioned gray buildings are scattered in rows, with trees and shrubs dotted here and there. Although it contains more than 2,000 households, peace seems to rule everything.

"When we started we weren't entirely sure this would be the right community, but after the first year we realized very quickly that we had made the right choice. People here have lived in this community for some 20 years. Everybody knows each other.

When we met the residents we saw that this could be something that they could enjoy. They are very nice people and you can't help liking them as soon as you meet them," said Jake.

But it was still an effort to get the small school accepted. With salons, parties and school opening days, people are given to know Jake and his school, but what brings people together often consumes much time. This February, Jake's school started to offer free classes to the residents committee and other people that couldn't afford them.

"Sometimes it is hard for them to remember long words, even words like government and police-officer, which are very useful to them. But we do have an officer, surnamed Wang, in the community. When I find a personal meaning for them, it becomes easier because everything is in front of them," said Jake.

Hard times

Jake started his own school last August with Jessica Lee, his Chinese partner, and the only other member of the faculty that time, and it was hard to recruit any students at the beginning. For the first several months, they just had one student, Xing Fuqiang, a technician with Nokia. But Jake insisted on giving lessons in the way promised, and he did so personally as he was the only foreign teacher.

"It may be hard for Jake, but I thought it was lucky for me. I really enjoyed those several



Jake Cooke

'We want to be part of the community.'

'They are very nice people and you can't help liking them as soon as you meet them.'

'If you focus on making money, the quality may get bad. If you focus on high quality, money will happen.'

months when Jake gave me one-to-one lessons, and only for me," said the young man.

"It pays to be an honest and ethical businessman, and it is the only type you can be. It may be a little bit harder in the beginning, but then more people may know you and come close to you," Jake said.

Now some 60 students are taking different levels of courses in Jake's school and its faculty welcomed its sixth member some two months ago.

"There are a lot of pressures of course. You have to pay the salaries every month and people depend on you," said Jake. "But I never thought about giving it up. We love teaching so the day to day work really is never a problem."

Keep it small

In fact, Jake never seems to get bored with teaching English. After he had got a degree in teaching English in the US, he worked in companies like AT&T as an engineering trainer using the degree in engineering he got in Canada. He first went to Tokyo in 2003. He came to Beijing in 2004, where he secured a position in a company to provide business-consulting services for managers from companies like IBM and Nokia, traveling between Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou.

"I want to be more effective for my students who make their own choice to learn English, not those businessmen who are required to do it. And I'd like to keep my

school small so that we know all problems about our students and help them. It is more like a family," said Jake.

He arranged 1.5 hours every week on request for Amy Xia, a manager in charge of international education exchange programs, to discuss kinds of practical difficulties she encounters in her daily work. "This course is really customized and helpful," said Amy.

"We may expand from 50 to 60 students, and then from 60 to 70, taking very slow steps each time to ensure that not one student is left behind," said Jake. "The most important thing for me is to make it a great school, to keep every student happy. Anyway, if you just focus on making money, the quality may get bad. But if you focus on high quality, money will happen. That's the way it should be," said Jake.

The engineering graduate's business theory seems geared to his small community school quite well. And out there on the community's playground, several boys are swinging, letting out peals of laughter when they fly towards the sky. Two girls are sliding down the slide, giggling. A gray-haired gentleman sits on a stone bench under the tree nearby, reading a newspaper. Several senior people pace with hands behind their backs along the path, walking their dogs slowly.

Jake's small school seems to have lost itself among the other residential buildings, as if it had always been there.



Jake in his class

Photos provided by ILTC

Not so smart, smart cards

By Carlos Santamaria

A couple of weeks ago, Beijing's public transport system introduced automatic checking machines on city buses and the subway in an effort to modernize and get rid of the paper tickets which have been around for over 30 years.

The new 'smart cards' are valid for all municipal buses, lines one and two on the subway and the Batong light rail, and can be recharged at all subway stations, so one can avoid having to stand in line to buy a ticket during rush hour and risk missing your train and not have to worry about having enough change. Great news for commuters, right?

I'm afraid not.

I take the subway each day and have noticed that the new system still has a long way to go before paper tickets can be



Automatic checking machines in a Beijing subway station IC Photo

scrapped.

Neither subway workers nor commuters appear to have gotten the hang of it yet, and thus they can end up lining up at the ticket booth because the ticket lady does

not know how to work the machine properly.

On top of that, the new cards don't work exactly the same as monthly passes in most Western countries. You get no discount and just pay

in advance for your tickets, except on buses, where you do get 20 percent off the original one to two kuai fares. Even if you combine subway and light rail, you can actually end up losing money, as two normal tickets on your smart card add up to six kuai, not the five kuai you'd normally pay for a paper ticket with access to both trains.

Why are municipal authorities still reluctant to issue monthly passes, as they have for years and which you can still obtain if you have good guanxi? Most commuters would visit the ticket booth only once a month and lowering fares for pre-paid cards would encourage Beijing to use public transport and relieve heavy traffic, both much needed ahead of the 2008 Olympic Games.

BJ's Love & Hate

Mixing business with pleasure

By David Drakeford

Mandatory business dinners and drink-binges are common practice in China as are the social networks or guanxi that see a large number of desirable vacancies filled by friends and family. In Beijing, perhaps more than any other Chinese city, laowais seem to follow this model. It is unwise for instance, to bad mouth a Beijinger for they could well be in charge of recruitment for the next major movie to come to our fine capital, editor of a surviving listings magazine, or best friend of the person that was going to buy you a 60 yuan martini.

There's a certain pleasure to be had in schmoozing, name dropping, and offering sweet jobs to anyone who was nice to you at a party once but what of our forefathers' advice – never combine the two worlds?

The first danger of course, is that the friend you recommended might not necessarily be the perfect candidate for the job. Sure he doesn't shy away from getting the drinks in and has a hilarious story about a toilet in Nepal but does that mean he can successfully micro-manage and motivate a team of media misfits? As business practice shapes up and wheat removed from chaff old recommendations may come back to haunt you.

Another worry is, as always, connected with alcohol. There is a limit to how much your workmates should know about you and what you think is your own funniest story (the time you got everyone fired) might not give you the jolly reputation you had hoped for.

The third, and biggest, problem could be your inability to socialise as you once used to. Remember your old boss who would only talk shop when you invited him out to one in five drinks? It's you now, isn't it? Last night's CCTV9 may not be the best conversational gambit of the night but at least it's a change of pace from work work work.

Beijing Daze

The consolation of philosophy

By Edmund Backhouse

Boethius lay awaiting death in the prison of the first Ostrogoth King of Rome when he wrote *De Consolazione Philosophiae*, his great treatise on the vicissitudes of fortune and the inconstancy of friends. The minor ups and downs of my own small life seem nothing compared to the tragedy that befell a man once so high in name and place, but the end of a love affair confirmed Boethius as right in believing that a contemplation of the things of the mind is an effective salve for the wounds inflicted by the turns of fate.

I am currently engaged in translating a work of comparative philosophy, so my course of treatment was readily to hand. The book in question looks at the philosophy of civil rights in China. The



Boethius

burden of the author's – a former head of the Academy of Law, and now a very senior government official – argument is that whilst, unsurprisingly, historically China did not frame questions of rights in the same way or the same language as the West, evidence can be found in early Chinese thinking of similar concerns about limiting the power of the ruler in a state by

asserting the natural rights of the ruled.

The chapter I am currently working on argues that in pre-Qin Chinese philosophy, it was widely held that rulers were subject to popular restraint. The will of Heaven, the numinous power which grants the mandate of kings and princes, was cognate with the will of the people.

The author quotes the *Shang Shu*, an early (circa the sixth century BCE) collection of historical writings, to the effect that Heaven regards favourably what the people regard favourably – the common people are the ultimate arbiters of what is right in a state and from their sovereign. A passage from the *Zuo Zhuan*, another ancient historical text, tells us that Heaven does not give life to the people for the benefit

of their monarch; rather, it establishes him for the good of the people.

Some argue that 'Asian values' find international human rights standards based on the western tradition alien and inapplicable. Yet a study of sources shows that there is much in the early Chinese canon that expresses broadly similar aspirations and concepts. Dialogue between scholars east and west can help shape a genuinely universal framework of rights. The evidence is that such a process need not entail any compromise and may rather enrich and extend our understanding of rights.

In Boethius, *Philosophia* tells us we should neither hope for anything nor be afraid. Hearts thus settled may endure and perhaps come to better days.

Does quantity qualify?

By Olivier Sasportas.

In May 2006 for the first time a Chinese blog became number one at the Technorati's top 100 popular sites.

With 45857 links from 29181 sites, the Xu Jinglei actress blog – <http://blog.sina.com.cn/m/xujinglei> – dethroned 'Boing Boing' – www.boingboing.net – and became de facto the biggest blog in the blogosphere.

It was predictable. China has already more than 36 millions blogs with 16 million active bloggers – to compare, the USA counts 15 to 30 millions active bloggers – and the demographic factor is essential for blog search tool like Technorati.

Technorati provides infor-

mation on blogs – their links to other blogs, their tags. 41 million sites and 2 billion links are already referenced. A good rank in the popular list depends on a blog's capacity to attract links to its url address or its posts.

A Chinese blog on the top of this list traduces a profound trend in the blogosphere. Traditionally dominated by Anglo-Saxons, the blog phenomenon has extended to many countries. Tools like Technorati constantly have to adapt their computation method if they went to remain pertinent. The recent Xu jinglei breakthrough is due to such modification, but non-English pages are still undercounted. Theoretically many other Chinese blog

should appear in this list – even if we consider the lack of pinging by some Chinese blog service providers.

But is such a list relevant?

Technorati distinguishes the 'Popular list' from the 'Favorite list' – based on users votes, and non existing links. In other words: quantity doesn't always mean quality – according to Technorati's users taste.

But a more interesting aspect of this 'rank based on quantity' is when the same number of links logically implies a different level of 'quality'. Here, the nature of the links plays the key role.

Some blogs are only linked to the front page, when others



Xu Jinglei's blog

are linked to every individual post – which induces a selective approach.

Second observation: the more articles you write, the greater the chances to multiply links. On the other hand, a less prolific, but exceptionally good blogger, would catch the attention of readers and might generate the same number of links.

In such a case, the same quantity of links differently qualifies the two blogs.

Avoid dodgy IDs

By Annie Wei

This week, the city management bureau in Huilongguan, Changping district announced that they had discovered a gang who forge people's identifications and certificates. "And for the first time we've found people forging working permits for foreigners," said one member of the staff.

So is a fake work permit any use to foreigners? Formal organizations, like schools and big Chinese enterprises will arrange certificates for their foreign employees. A fake work permit will not be registered with the Public Security Bureau (PSB) so it will not aid a foreigner in obtaining a resident permit or work visa.

Anyone caught with a fake work permit will be fined between 10,000 and 100,000 yuan, and may even be deported. If your company does not help you obtain a work permit but hires you, you can call the exit and entry bureau at the PSB for advice.

For your own peace of mind, it's probably better to get a signed contract and work permit if you wish to spend any length of time in China.

How to apply for a work permit:

Your employers are under obligation to apply to the local labor department if they wish to take you on. Once the department has approved the application, your company can help you to get a work visa and work permit. Once you get a work permit, you will still need to get a resident card from the Exit and Entry Management Bureau.



A German engineer working with his Chinese colleagues

IC Photo

Required paperwork:

1. A copy of your passport and visa
2. A copy of your education certificate and a translated version
3. A translated version of your CV

Notes: 1 The translation should be done by

a translation agency appointed by the PSB and it should be stamped

2. You will need to have passed a health check
3. Once the authorities have approved your work requirements you will be given a work permit and certificate

Spread the word: Voice recording in Beijing

By David Drakeford

If the concept of education appeals to you, but students themselves seem rather trying, then voice recording work could be the more relaxing way to earn a buck. Typically it's a few well-paid hours a week for cash-in-hand but some 'foreign experts' in Beijing speak for their supper, recording as a means of fulltime employment.

Throughout China, the market for language learning materials recorded by native speakers is huge. Tapes and CDs have long been an aid to teachers and new media such as Internet radio and mp3s create even more outlets. English is the most popular, of course, but other languages such as Russian, French and Italian are all recorded in studios across Beijing – a city with rich deposits of foreigners.

The first step is to find a studio. Searching through bookshops for materials that come with tapes and CDs is an obvious start, but publishers themselves may not have their own studio, preferring to source the work out. Start with big companies involved in education and also check regularly for vacancies in newspa-



Recording your voice

Photo by David Drakeford

pers and on the Internet. The number one method to find this kind of work however is through contacts. English teachers will be approached and asked to recruit others into the fold. Express an interest to your friends and don't be shy when handing out your *mingpian*.

The strongest weapon in the English speaker's armoury will be a standard American or English accent. It maybe that you can do a variety of other voices but after two hours of recording time you may regret making Bruce, the overenthusiastic 12-year-old Australian, as realistic as you could.

Rates of pay are typically two to three hundred yuan per hour for dialogue but can go higher if the studio has specific needs or really wants to keep you happy. It doesn't always pay to be too tough with negotiations however; quality may not be the top priority but rather a willingness to come out at short notice.

It may not be the highest paid job in Beijing but it requires zero preparation time and, other than a sore throat, you can perform in almost any condition.

ASK Beijing Today

B.S from Toronto also asked: Are there any good public swimming pools in Beijing?

A: In the summer months its inevitable that many low-cost public pools will be packed with people. The Chinese phrase, "like the boiling of dumplings" comes to mind.

So it may be better to splash out and opt for a dip in the city's numerous hotel pools. Alternatively, you could try some of the university swimming pools, which are of varying quality.

Local authorities have strict rules for supervising safety in public swimming pools. For example, swimming pool owners are obliged to re-cycle the water 24 hours day. But it's never going to be possible to ensure that all pools, in all parts of the city, are totally clean.

We asked a local swimmer whether he had ever become ill after going to a public swimming pool but he said no. He said that the best bet was to go to hotel swimming pools, which are normally cleaner and safer. "Go to one and have a look, then you can decide whether you want to swim in it or not," he said.

Louis Zhou, an IT consultant from the US asked: Is there wireless connection in public places for my laptop?

A: Often you don't see the importance of wireless connections in public places until one day you find you urgently need it.

Most hotels provide Internet connections, although not all are wireless. Four and five-star hotels provide wireless connections. The Kerry Centre Hotel and China World Hotel have wireless Internet connections in the lobby area. The airport has wireless Internet too but power sockets are hard to find.

Starbucks provides wireless connections. If you are not a member of CNET, a wireless service provider, they can provide you with a login number and keys for the service. The service has been known to be slightly unreliable.

Quite a few cafes and restaurants have started providing wireless Internet now, especially those in Haidian district and Chaoyang district where there are many western style cafes that cater to the needs of the international community.

If you have any questions about living in Beijing, write to dongnan@ynet.com, Beijing Today will try to find you the answers to your questions.

(By Annie Wei)

Flowers in the mirror,

What is Meng Jinghui's new mini-theater drama really trying to say?

By Zhang Nan

Meng's idea

Meng Jinghui is a famous drama director at the National Theater Company of China. He had directed popular dramas like *Accidental Death of an Anarchist* and *Rhinoceros in Love*. Last year, he directed the multi-media musical drama *Amber*. At the beginning of this year, he pushed out his multi-media play for children, *Magic Mountain*.

The idea of directing *The Flowers in the Mirror, Moon in the Water* came to Meng when he read a poem of the same title written by Xi Chuan. Just in time, the National Theater Company of China had a project of a series of shows for drama in small theaters, Meng decided to make the poem into a drama.

"I tried to present the poem by drama in two ways. The first is to find out life details, stories from our daily life according to the meaning of the poem, and the other is to conclude these life phenomena on the basis of the poem's original meaning and present them in a poetic way," said Meng.

"There is no reason why I should direct the drama in this way," Meng said, "There are no plots in the drama. The drama and the stage setting are just like a poem or an abstract work of art. It is not necessary for you to understand the play."

Meng said he wanted to express his idea freely without too much consideration. "An artist should do his work in a free, flexible and comfortable environment. If I have to take anything into consideration, such as politics, economy, and common people's opinions or keep on working in a traditional way, I cannot make any progress."

However, most of the audience couldn't understand the drama. At the end of the first show, the audience stopped Meng on the stage and did not let him go, asking him to explain what he wanted to express. "It is natural that the audience has this kind of reaction," Meng said, "Not all can understand artistic expression very well. They need time to understand. We also need time to explain to them what art is."

"Art is not as simple as one plus one equals two," Meng said, "It is a kind of feeling, which requires people to feel and experience. It needs time."



Photos by Li Yan

Ok, you lost me

Six people on the stage, poetic dialogues, and simple settings - these form Meng Jinghui's new experimental drama *The Flowers in the Mirror, Moon on the Water*.

At the end of the play, Meng cut the fiberglass threads hanging at the top of the theater. The threads dropped down onto the heads and bodies of the viewing crowd.

It can be a kind of celebration. "I did it without planning beforehand," said Meng, "It was the last show of the drama. When I was sitting at the second floor of the theater, I looked at these fiberglass threads. The idea of cutting off these threads suddenly rose in my mind. It doesn't mean anything. I did it because I wanted to. It is just for fun."

There were six people in the play, four men, two women. The drama begins with the six people separately reciting poems of Xi Chuan, a famous modern poet. They recited different poems one by one in plain and pale voices.

Then the drama was presented in several small and irrelative stories. The scenes changed into different stories. The place went from an airplane, to a psychiatrist's home.

The people on the stage sometimes looked around with fearful expressions; sometimes they suddenly fell down onto the sofa or shouted or tortured each other.

The stage was decorated with simple settings. White sofas, black chairs, a metal bed with clocks around, and big white cockroach model.

In order to strengthen the impact of the drama, video, man-made fog, and noise had been added into the drama.

Experience and understandings

"There are no main characters in the drama, nor are there subordinate characters either," said Su Xiaogang, an actor at the National Theater Company of China. "Each of the small characters has pushed the development of the whole play."

Tang Zixiang used to be a dancer in Benxi Singing and Dancing Group in Liaoning Province and turned to be a drama actor not long ago. "It is the first time I have acted in an experimental drama. I felt rather pressed and nervous at the beginning," he said.

The character that Tang played in the drama represents the Mirror in the drama's name. "I feel I am really acting as a mirror in the play, reflecting people's behavior in their daily life," Tang said, "In the drama, I am a little character without any special hobbies but fond of Darwin's Evolutionism. He has his own thinking towards the society and life. In my actor's lines, there are several paragraphs selecting from *The Origin of Species*. I usually connect them with our daily life. Perhaps it is one of the ways that the drama influences people."

"I can understand that the audience may not understand the drama. Everyone is different, so their opinions towards the drama are different," Tang said. "When I knew that I was selected by Meng to participate, I really had no idea why. During the rehearsal, Meng just asked us to perform as we liked. He gave us a totally free environment to act. In four and a half days, the basic form of the drama was decided. However, in our daily rehearsals, new things would come out. So we changed our performance again and again. The version that we finally performed is totally different from the original one."

Tang's opinion was proved in Shen Jiani's comments about the drama. Shen is a TV play actress. It is her first time both to cooperate with Meng and act in an experimental drama.

"The process of preparing for acting in the drama was exciting. But since there was no script for the play, but only Xi Chuan's poems, I felt perplexed," Shen said, "I remember that when we started rehearsals, Meng gave us selected poems of Xi Chuan and asked us to read them and act freely. Then he would select from these poems and put them in the play. Meng has good taste in art and beauty. We were very relaxed and disburdened while performing."

Shen's character represents Water. "I feel I play a woman with an indifferent appearance but an enthusiastic and thoughtful heart. The drama has succeeded in showing the relationship between people and city. Everyone now in society looks unconcerned about others; however, they all have their own stories and experiences. The social evolution has worn people's love and enthusiasm away. But it is still necessary for them to express their emotion sometimes."



Only an empty mirror

Flowers in the Mirror, Moon on the Water is quite fitting for the play. Just as no one can reach the flowers in the mirror and the moon in the water, nor can people get to the core of the drama either.

Meng Jinghui's drama is still a bit rough and powerless.

To think from another point of view, it may be because I have seen too many plays to it. I wish that I was 20 years old and confused. I wish that I could have more pointless dialogues.

The hazy drama, the

The Flowers in the Mirror, Moon on the Water is quite fitting for the play. Just as no one can reach the flowers in the mirror and the moon in the water, nor can people get to the core of the drama either.

The first time I watched the play, it seemed that I had understood every sentence the actors said. However, I couldn't reach the idea that the play, or Meng Jinghui, the director of the play, wants to convey.

I watched the play again. However, my feeling was totally different from last time. I suddenly found

moon on the water

say?



or here

A boom in experimental drama

Moon on the Water is a beautiful and phrase for it represents illusion there are flowers and a moon. The drama is just a mirror about people's affections, which

view, the reason why I feel so many things like this and got used and everything made me curious be enthralled by these forceful but

Shang Xiaolan, drama critic

Meng Jinghui's drama came to my life when I was in college, and from then on, I fell deeply in love with his innovations in experimental drama. Meng seeks drama topics from real life and often finds some originally vigorous people being beaten down by life. On the stage, he tries to express bravery and perseverance, so as to convey the strength of the life force. Through his former works like *Rhinoceros*

in Love, *The Balcony* and *Accidental Death of an Anarchist*, we can see the experiment in the script. In *The Flowers in the Mirror*, *Moon on the Water*, he employs a lot of techniques that were rarely used on stage before. Electronic music combined with piano, dazzling lighting with dropping sand, chaotic DV and the pure expression in actor's faces, all impressed the audience both mentally and visually

Just as Meng pointed out, the function of the pioneer is to wake the masses, not to present a false picture of peace and prosperity. In *The Flowers in the Mirror*, *Moon on the Water*, time and space switched and overlapped freely. Symbolism, metaphors and absurd metamorphosis were employed widely. In my opinion, impressibility and logic can construct life, but maybe the undiscovered power in the human mind

is the foremost headspring. Meng is really a talented artist in mixing all the significant elements in a drama in a touchable way.

Although his work is no stranger to controversy, it definitely has a positive impact on the development of drama. I think the diversity of styles in his dramas has injected creativity and vigor into the theater art.

Chen Shasha, journalist

the reflection of life

the hazy feeling and understanding I got from the play made me like it.

The play was made of several separate stories, as if the director had put life fragments together at random. All the actors spoke without emotion. Their voices were pale and flat. Sometimes, they just repeated a sentence or a phrase again and again; some times, they behaved like insane people.

It made me feel as if I was watching people's real lives. Every one tightens their nerves and tries to work hard. But they lose their happiness and enthusiasm for life. When the actors shout on the stage,

they were just looking for the meaning of being alive.

I continuously connected the drama with my own experience. I had asked myself the same kind of questions that the characters asked in the play; I had the same feeling with the character when they think upon their present and past.

People cannot touch the flowers in the mirror and the moon in the water. But they can see the reflection from the mirror and water. They reflect people's real life, from which we can think about our fault and make improvements in the future.

Lucky Zhang, journalist

Pointing to all directions, leaving nothing

The forms Meng used on stage did leave a deep impression. The light, shadow, media effects all produced an artistic interruption to the flow of the drama. Every time the audience tried to organize the plot, something happened to stop their speculation, like sound of scratching, new characters rushing in, and the repeated reflections on the aluminum boards above the stage.

The problem was that the forms seemed to do nothing with the content and the theme. They were more an accumulation than operation. Meng seemed to be

showing off all the metaphors and symbols he knew. The result was that the audience's mood was leading away in different directions.

Meng's drama is always as Chinese avant-garde, this is, perhaps, not true when he chose actors. From the start, all the performers on stage looked like they were in a drama academy workshop. The ways they read Xi Chuan's poem, walked, turned around, and fell into the couch, were insufferably academic.

The best of the drama was the design of layout: the skeleton of

a giant flea lying in the sand, broken clocks scattered around, walking still. That appealed to me as an imitation of Franz Kafka's *Metamorphosis*. If not for the flea, the whole drama would have been a nonsense based on nothing. By for borrowing the despair, fantasy, irony of Kafka, the drama would have been a boring vulgar adulterous story.

After two and a half hours, *The Flower in the Mirror*, *Moon on the Water* leaves you with nothing but a pile of forms and that huge flea.

Jane Wang, Journalist



Pretty Jun Ji-hyun roots her graceful daisy in my heart

Tan Fei, a famous show-biz critic and manager of a local film and TV company

I will quote the girl, one of Jun's fans, sitting next to me on the premiere when Jun showed up: "She isn't a gorgeous girl, but she's pretty, and so lovely." I think she is neat, cozy and natural, like a virgin.

Different to the grace of Lee Young-ah, Jun can convey an air of light melancholy. This style is not common among Chinese actresses.

The really outstanding point is the female role. She is the daisy, small and ordinary without strong fragrance, waiting for her love in the blooming tulips in Amsterdam.

The impressionism and the classical music are contrasted with the guns and blood. Fortunately, she becomes the painkiller for the men. When she uses the lip language to touch her beloved and finally sacrifice her life for him, nobody will rationally conclude that this ending has been done thousands of times.

She is worthy our tears, and I ask for nothing more. She reminds me of the daisy and is sincere from the very beginning.

Bad plot

kenkwan86 from Singapore

I watched the movie thinking it might be good, after all *Infernal Affairs* was great. Unfortunately, this movie is very bad.

The cop-killer chase appears from nowhere. Wasn't the cop on another case? But suddenly, they just switched from arresting drugs dealers to assassins. Anyway, it spoils the logic of the plot.

Isn't it stupid that the cop starts shooting at the killer when he is helping him out of being shot at? And if the cop had much better intelligence, he would realize that the assassin didn't want to kill him. Why did he shoot at his arm when he had the opportunity?

The story is also too slow. Please don't put thrillers and slow Korean-style poetic love story into one bowl. It spoils both, being neither here nor there.

What's on



We are Family (Hong Kong)

Showtime: June 8, 2006

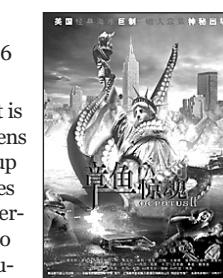
The Chinese version of *Meet the Parents*. Flight attendant Huang Jinfeng and her boyfriend Li Zhijie are one-step away from marriage. When Li pops the question in a romantic atmosphere, Huang surprisingly loses all the courage to accept the proposal because of her weird family: grandma, father, and two elder brothers (all performed by one actor), who have gotten rid of five of Huang's boyfriends.



Sahara (US)

Showtime: June 16, 2006

An African dictator's nuclear waste disposal plant is polluting the sea and threatens the planet's ecosystem. It's up to Dirk Pitt and his associates from NUMA (National Underwater and Marine Agency) to locate the source of the pollution and shut it down.



Meeting my dog instead of me

Clever boy from Beijing

Suburban Amsterdam life is like a post card, with beautiful and peaceful daisies on the front, and a blank page of the actress's love on the back.

Daisy can rocket to the top of the box office in Korea because of Jun Ji-hyun, who is somehow depressed, lonely, innocent, and ordinary. There were people crying when they watched it, and I also wanted to make an emotional release with this movie. But I'm not quite sure where I could start off. Who is the true love for her? If she loves the cop, how could she fall in love with the killer? Was it not the cop who built the bridge and gave her daisies?

Maybe our directors spend so much time emphasizing the beautiful life with regrets that they have forgotten what true love is - true love isn't shaky, even though you know it's wrong. Faye Wong has a song named *If You're Fake*, saying that 'if you're fake and your love and mind lives elsewhere, should I still love you or not? If you're not you, not the old soft you, can I feel sweet again in your arms?'

The painter's first love is like a prince and princess story produced using impractical beauties and artistic elements such as music and paintings. The daisies are like Cinderella's shoes that can lead her to her prince instead of thinking that man is the one she really needs.

The movie is a tragedy. The two men give their love, but the fact is our little princess doesn't quite understand love, and just falls in love with the daisies instead of either of them.

From top: Lee Sung-jae as the cop, Jeon Ji-hyun as the painter, and Jung Woo-sung as the killer



larger audiences.

While the movie gambles the words will propel the audiences to get involved, the Chinese dubbing takes place of the original voices in the cinemas of China. What a pity that the affected Chinese voices always drag me away from the plot, and it's terrible to watch one facial expres-

sion and hear another tune of speaking. Horrible, really!

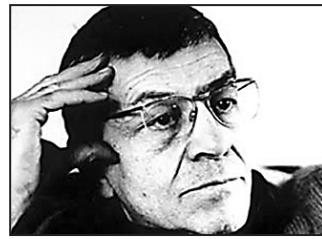
Dubbing should help the acting and make it closer to the local audiences. In a Korean-wave era where we have become familiar with the voices of the original actors, it's absolutely necessary to match the voices to the faces.

Octopus 2: River of Fear (US)

Showtime: June 20, 2006

Dead bodies are being found in New York harbor. The police have no clues until Nick and his colleague realize the killer is a giant octopus. Everybody, especially the police captain, refuses to believe Nick's story, and soon the harbor will be filled with boats for the 4th of July celebrations...

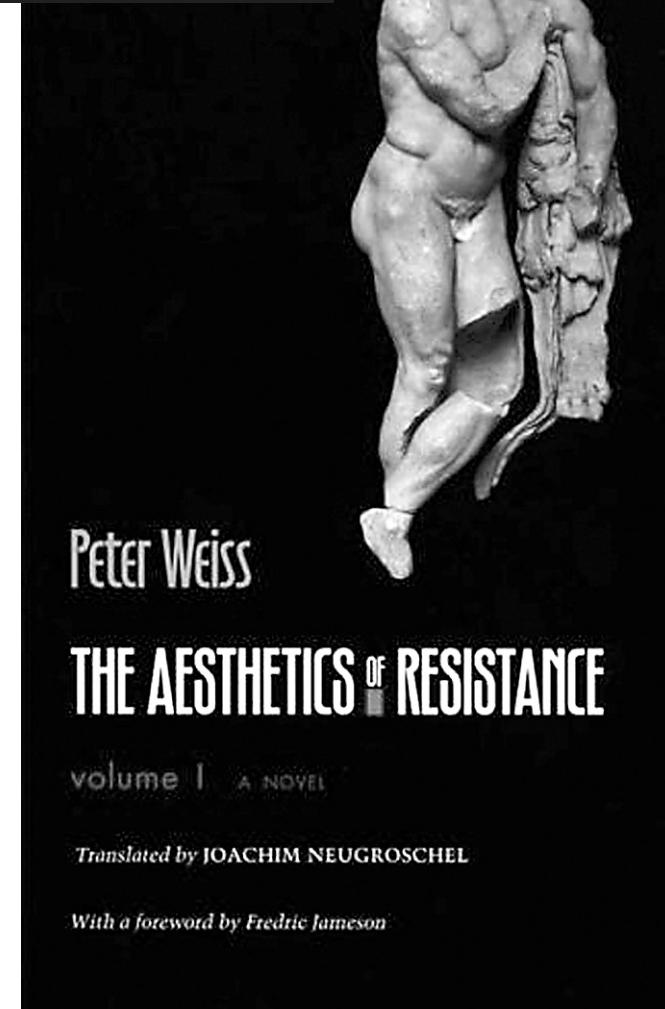
The Aesthetics of Resistance



Peter Weiss
2005
960 pages
Key themes: Art, philosophy, politics, Spanish civil war.
The masterly three-part novel, *Die Ästhetik des Widerstands*, first published between 1975 and 1981, is one of the highpoints of twentieth century German literature, and still stands as the most significant German novel published after *The Tin Drum* (only Arno Schmidt's late, unwieldy works challenge it for that position). The first part has been translated (by Joachim Neugroschel), but there is currently no publisher for this book. (Excerpts of the translation have appeared in recent years.)

A large and complex work, the focus of the novel is the time from the late 30s into World War II – though there is no strict chronology in the novel, and there are many varied essayistic digressions. Weiss uses historical facts and a huge number of personages as the basis for his novel. The central characters, insofar as there are any, are the members of a small resistance group (called 'Red Orchestra' by the Nazis). The group was active until late 1942 when most of the members were captured and executed (after being tortured), scenes that Weiss vividly captures.

An unnamed narrator – a Weiss-like figure – tells the story. It is not, however, a simple narrative, beginning with its challenging opening section, a lengthy, precise, and evocative descriptive section on the Pergamon altar, a stunning relief piece taken from Greece and installed in a Berlin museum. Art is central to the novel, as Weiss returns again and again to the aesthetics of the title. *Gericault's Raft of the Medusa* is another piece discussed at length, opening the second volume. Angkor, Picasso's *Guernica*, socialist realist painting, and Goya – to name only a few – also find their place. Weiss – himself a very talented painter – masterfully accomplishes the difficult task of representing the visual arts in a literary work. Literature – Dante's *Divine Comedy*, Kafka, among others – are also strong presences.



I'm a left leaning, veggie munching, trade union marching, open-toed sandal sporting, long haired hippy. Sounds like the perfect book to idle away those tedious hours of consciously objecting to a day's honest work. Right?

"Arguably one of the most demanding works of modern German literature, Weiss's tome has no linear narrative development, no clear beginning, middle or end, no chapter breaks, few paragraph breaks and no clear plot lines. (...) Like the work of Brecht and other old-guard leftist writers, Weiss's Aesthetics seems, on occasion, rather anachronistic. The questions it addresses – what role, for instance, the artist should play in the class struggle – are so deeply rooted in the time when Weiss wrote that his novel cries out not only for linguistic translation but also for a kind of historical and political translation; the latter, it turns out, is more difficult."

– Noah Isenberg, *The Nation*

I stand corrected.
"Yes, The Aesthetics of Resistance is intimidating. But it is also exhilaratingly strange, compelling, and original. Readers who dare enter this demanding verbal landscape will not come away empty-handed."

– Mark M Anderson, *Bookforum*

Dare 'eh? Sounds like fighting talk. Although, I would have you know I'm a new man and a pacifist.

"The Aesthetics of Resistance, a novel of striking intellectual power that explores Weiss's 'search for himself', combines the wishful thinking of a fictional biography of his life as it should have been with a history of how fascism was resisted in Spain, in the cities of exile, and most important, in the Berlin underground."

– Peter Demetz, *After the Fires* (1986)

Search for the self? Now you're talking. Sounds inspiringly macho and self

absorbed. No doubt this glorious work made him the idol of millions...in a uniformly dressed, everybody's equal kind of way...

"[The book] represented the culmination of the career of an author who always stood on the fringes of the German literary scene (.....) Already unfashionable when the work appeared, the collapse of East European socialism has made it even more so. Nevertheless, its magnificent 'epic' qualities, which link it to the great philosophical novels of the earlier part of the 20th century, surely mark it as a milestone in post-war German literature."

– J.H. Reid, in *Encyclopedia of German Literature* (2000), p. 998

Brilliant, obscure and unfashionable? The socialist's holy trinity. So what do we think of him today?

"The monuments of modernism today rise like Ozymandias' statue in the sand: Ulysses, Proust, Beckett, Pound's Cantos, The Making of Americans, The Waste Land. At last, we have an English translation of a work that stands alongside them."

– Robert Buckeye, *Review of Contemporary Fiction*

Well, I suppose I'm impressed. But lets give the final word to another deceased giant of German literature. (Another as in 'other than Weiss,' not 'other than me.')

"His ... thousand-page work of fiction which he began when he was well over fifty, making a pilgrimage over the arid slopes of our cultural and contemporary history in the company of *pavor nocturnus*, the terror of the night, and laden with a monstrous weight of ideological ballast, is a magnum opus which sees itself, almost programmatically, not only as the expression of an ephemeral wish for redemption, but as an expression of the will to be on the side of the victims at the end of time."

– W G Sebald, *On the Natural History of Destruction* (Eng. 2003), p. 190
(By Gareth George)

Local shelf

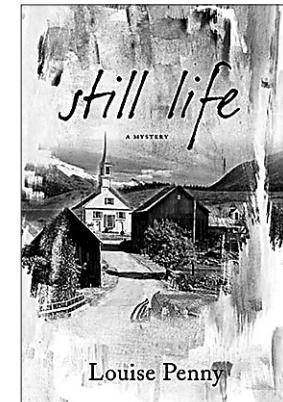
Romantik

By Robert Klanten
Gestalten Verlag, 144 pages, 300 yuan

Classical romantic elements through outstanding examples of contemporary illustration, photography and graphic design, with a clear reference to nineteenth century Romanticism. Since the computer is a creative tool, today's 'Romantik' is pragmatic rather than dogmatic. At the same time, the book challenges the role of the computer in the design process, appealing to the romantic in all of us.

Available:

Timezone 8 Art books
Where: Jia 24-2 Meishuguan Dong Dajie, Dongcheng
Tel: 6400 4427



Still Life

By Louise Penny
St Martin's Minotaur, 320 pages, 150 yuan

The residents of a tiny Canadian village called Three Pines are shocked when the body of Miss Jane Neal is found in the woods. Chief Inspector Armand Gamache of the Montreal Surete is called in to investigate. Slowly the author draws the reader into a beautifully told, lyrically written story of love, life, friendship, and tragedy. And it's a pretty darn good mystery too.

Available:

CNPIEC Bookstore
Where: 16, Gongti Dong Road, Chaoyang
Tel: 6500 1859

Plan B 2.0: Rescuing a Planet Under Stress and a Civilization in Trouble

By Lester R. Brown
WW Norton, 352 pages, 120 yuan

"All the problems we face can be dealt with using existing technologies," said Brown, the Earth Policy Institute president, who presents a worldwide survey on environmental devastation wrought by breakneck industrialization and the heedless, auto-centric, "throwaway economy": oil and water shortages, pollution, deforestation, soil erosion, desertification, collapsing fisheries, mass extinctions, looming famine and pestilence – and even global warming.

Available: Beijing Bookworm
Where: Building 4, Nan Sanlitun Road, Chaoyang
Tel: 6586 9507
(By Wang Xiaoyuan)

Are you still using cash? Are you still struggling to earn enough cash for all those luxuries you want? Why not have a look at what you have already got? There are always things we own but seldom use, why not trade them in for something you really need?

The world is facing a lack of resources but most of us continue to waste what could be reused. Imagine how much paper and metal we could save if we swapped things with other people rather than dumped them. When we trade, we meet people, instead of a cashier behind a till; when we trade, we talk, persuade and make agreements; when we trade, we are doing something our ancestors did thousands of years ago.

Swap shop



From paper clip to plush pad

Kyle McDonald, 26, was a delivery boy for a fast food company. He lived with his girlfriend in Montreal, Canada. Like thousands of young Canadian men, Kyle could not afford a house of his own, but he got an idea one day: why not exchange something he already owned for a flat? In July 2005, Kyle, starting with nothing more than a paper clip, began to exchange things on the Internet. In just one year he had managed to land himself one-year rent-free accommodation in a smart duplex in Phoenix.

First, Kyle advertised his paper clip on the website <http://www.craigslist.org>, and expressed his wish to exchange it for something bigger or better. He added in the advertisement that he would like to visit anyone who showed interest in his paper clip, no matter how far away they lived.

Two ladies living in Vancouver contacted him

a few days later and said they would exchange a fish-shaped pen for his clip. Taking the pen with him, Kyle went to Seattle, in the US, to watch a baseball game. At the airport, he bumped into Annie Robbins, an artist famed for her hate of consumerism. Robbins happened to have seen Kyle's advert on the Internet and she immediately agreed to exchange the pen for her work, a clay doorknob with a smiling face design. Kyle then exchanged this for a small camping stove, then a second-hand generator and then a neon sign for beer and a barrel of the brown stuff.

"This has turned into an obsession," said Kyle. "So many people have heard that I'm trading up to a house that if I don't take it, I'll be a schmuck. I'll take a house anywhere in the world. That's kind of the adventure, trading up to a house and then moving there."

It seemed that Kyle's idea was working. In

February 2006, a Canadian radio station host showed an interest in his beer sign and barrel and exchanged them for a snowmobile. It was then that the media took an interest in Kyle's story. A snowmobile magazine contacted him to trade his mobile for an all-expenses-paid trip to Yahk, in British Columbia. Kyle accepted the offer and then gave the trip to a businessman for a panel van produced in 1995. After cleaning the van, Kyle traded it for a recording contract with a producer in a Toronto Record Company.

Then came the turning point. Jody Gnant, a singer from Phoenix, who owned a duplex with an empty unit, said she would swap the recording contract for a year in her duplex. "There is an amazing energy going on with this project," she said, "I'm thrilled that Kyle asked me to be a part of it."



Where to trade your clothes

<http://www.webtrados.com>
<http://www.onlylady.com>
<http://www.craigslist.org>
<http://www.tradegoods.com>

Start to trade today

Women in Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou have started a project to trade their clothes online this summer. Many of them have posted the information about the clothes they do not need on the website www.onlylady.com. Pictures of the clothes, their size, quality, and other descriptions are provided. The ladies also tell other web users what kind of clothes they are looking for.

"This is not a flea market or second hand market," said Yang Xiaolei. "The aim of this event is to let ladies swap something they like with something they don't, it's not about making a profit. We love clothes so we are trying to make the best use of them."



The first exchange was held in Shanghai on the first Sunday after the May Holiday. The encouraging thing about the event was that ladies managed to find high quality clothes there. "It would be a shame if your clothes were shabby and out-of-date. You know, just because of ladies' vanities", said Yang.

Miss Lu, who describes herself as a fashion victim, went to France last year and bought piles of clothes that she later found were not suitable at all. "I found my clothes so popular at the event, girls were so happy to swap their own clothes for real French clothes," she said.



Why we stock up

Pressure:

Working overtime, sadness, dissatisfaction and even guilt can drive us to spend money on those things we don't need. If 70 per cent of the things you buy are bought when you are under pressure, you will probably use 40 percent of them just once.

Low price temptation:

This is the trap for those who want to save money. Unfortunately, cheap clothes are not always the best so if you go for the bargains you may end up with a pile of cheap, poor-quality clothes filling your wardrobe.

(By Wang Xiaoyuan)



The four in As Four

The As Four story really began in 1991, when Ange and Adi met as fashion students in Munich, where, as Ange notes, "we always looked a little different." After graduation, they moved to New York, but the year they arrived, 1995, downtown was in a style funk.

"We had this big vision of the city," Ange says, "almost like a movie. It didn't live up to reality. We were told New York was dying out." In response, they set out to become beacons. Ange would often wear yarn braided into her hair and Adi had painted-on metallic eyebrows. They had a very Eastern European look and a unique ability to make it seem as if they were wearing their clothes upside down, commented fashion arbiter Mickey Boardman of *Paper*.

Reflecting their extraordinary beginnings, they used to be called 'Upside-down girls.' But it wasn't long before the girls started having a surprising degree of influence over downtown fashion.

They began styling for *Paper* and working in the now defunct store Dressing Room, where they met Gabi, a designer for Kate Spade. Then, mutual friends introduced the threesome to Kai, whose male-modeling career wasn't going quite as planned.

Kai describes their emotions: "We figured we had the same kind of life and sensibilities. We were also interested in similar things, so we decided to work together."

Related reading:

There are lots of collective designers in fashion circles.

Dolce & Gabbana: <http://eng.dolcegabbana.it/main.asp>

Basso & Brooke: <http://www.bassoandbrooke.com>

Viktor & Rolf: <http://www.viktor-rolf.com>

Y&Kei: the husband and wife design team Han-hee Yoon and Jin-young Kang

Love is a four-letter word



It all starts with love. New York is a playground that opens up all its doors for ultimate love. People find clothing tags say things like 'Made with love': the mark of the downtown-famous quartet fashion designers - As Four. Back in the mid-1990s, four friends who designed and lived together in a silver-sprayed loft in New York's Chinatown formed the brand. They are Angela from Tajikistan, Adi from Israel, Gabi from Lebanon, and Kai from Germany (the four use their first names only). However, 2005 came along and the collective experienced their Seven Year Itch. The three-As Four can still make it work because, for them, love is a four-letter word.

Made with love

Living and working under the silver roof, they were in love with one another, New York, and their clothes.

"Our work is an evolutionary outcome of our life, of us, and the world surrounding us," They said. Within their realms of fashion, the pure quintessence of the fab-4 was uniquely poetic, intensely ingenious and unabashedly uninhibited. Their original works, characterized by inventive cuts, elaborate couture-like details and expert tailoring, challenged the familiar topography of fashion. What they made was precious art-wear, and handmade at first, but it was wearable, too.

The runway debut was in 2001 in New York was when they showed the battery-powered, miniature 'hula dolls' wearing quirky paper outfits. One year later, their body-enveloping 'embryo suits', spiral-cut trousers and the famous metallic-print circle bags that famous singer Bjork regularly carries caused the press to say "the future of fashion, at least according to creative team As Four, lies in collaboration, not the personality cult of superstar designers."

For years, their collections have gone along with various downtown events. And their garments are to be found in stores like Colette in Paris, Via Busstop in Tokyo and Barneys in New York.

Stores information:

Barney's New York

660 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10021-8448
Tel: 212 826 8990

Colette

213 Rue Saint-Honoré
75001 Paris, France
Tel: 01-5535 3390

Lane Crawford

Pacific Place, 88 Queensway
Hong Kong
Tel: 852 2118 3668
or call the As Four Studio
Tel: 212 343 9777



They design as they live

"We are our work and our work is our life," they said, "We don't design; we live." Nothing could be more natural therefore welcomed when it comes from life. As Four has no traditions, no loyalties, and no rules. They seek to erase the lines between dreams and reality. When one telephones their work loft, the answering party will say "Future Planet of Style." They want this to be the future.

Clothing is about shaping the body in a new way for As Four. They do not recycle old silhouettes or their historical connotations. They do not merely arrange objects and colors and shapes. Instead, they create new laws and new meanings on those arrangements. That is creation.

Four different opinions from different corners of the world once produced the most remarkably beautiful garments. However, with Kai launching his solo brand Myself in 2005, now we have to separate our love for each of them.

Related reading:

ThreeasFour: <http://asfour.net/>

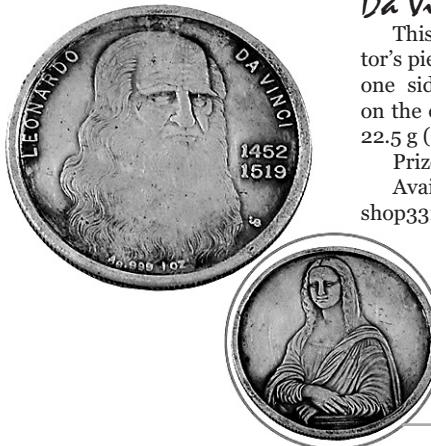
Myself: http://blog.zoozoom.com/zoozoom/2005/09/new_york_fashio_31.html

WWD: As Four Minus One = Myself. (Three-as-four and Kai Kuhne), published February 6, 2006

(By Shelley Xie)



No mystery to Da Vinci Code merchandizing mania



Da Vinci Coin

This limited edition collector's piece features Da Vinci on one side and the Mona Lisa on the other. 9999 pure silver. 22.5 g (one ounce).

Price: 800 yuan
Available: <http://shop33121826.taobao.com/>



Mona Lisa Cross-Stitch

Find out how her mysterious smile is formed by sowing it. 57 x 42 cm, the package includes 52 DMC stitch needles, a piece of 14ct stitch cloth, and the sample of the pattern.

Price: 128 yuan delivery free (along the subway line).
Available: <http://shop33154961.taobao.com/>

Da Vinci Code Board Game

This is a must for anyone who is fascinated by one of the most intriguing mysteries of our time. Ingenious puzzles, riddles, logic problems, conundrums and a thrilling race against both the timer and the other players all combine

in this fantastic new board game. For three to six players or teams, suitable for over 12s.

Price: 150 yuan
Available: Hong Qiao Market, Chongwenmenwai Road, Chongwen District



Da Vinci Code Movie

Premier Necklace

A necklace composed of black stretchy string with a silver-gilt six-angled star pendant. If you did not catch the premier of the movie, go and get the necklace.

Price: 25 yuan
Available: <http://shop33404371.taobao.com/>



A successful novel and movie often leads to merchandizing. The Da Vinci Code mania caused by Dan Brown is generating a lot of hard cash. Manufacturers around the world are competing to register the Da Vinci Code trademark and hope to cash in on its success.

If you search on Ebay using the keywords 'Da Vinci Code' you will find over 200 relevant items: fiction, analyzing books, DVDs, board games, cook books, tours of the Louvre and even hot underwear. A BI clock sold by someone from Oklahoma is listed in the search result, just because it has codes and symbols on its surface.

Dan Burstein, author of *Secrets of the Code: The Unauthorized Guide to the Mysteries Behind The Da Vinci Code*, speculated in his book that the profits related to the work of fiction have reached about US\$1 billion.

As sales experts predicted, the Da Vinci Code series will continue their popularity as long as the charm of the fiction lasts. Most of the customers are attracted by the complicated structure of the code box and the relevant historical and religious stories. However, the travel industry has most to benefit. An American agency has set up a 14-day tour package, tracing the course of the novel, starting from France and ending in Britain, at a cost of US\$8,895 per person.

Sony Ericsson Da Vinci Code Casual Shoulder Bag

Did you notice the big Sony screen in the street where Tom Hanks and Audrey Tautou rushed to solve the mystery? Sony has released its Da Vinci Code fashion series for the youth market. The bag is made of artificial leather, can hold five magazines and all your bits and pieces together.



Size: 75 cm in length, 50 cm in width. Color: White
Price: 55 yuan
Available: <http://shop33237829.taobao.com/>

Mug: The Code of Drinking

Another gift from Sony Ericsson. Color print pattern of Mona Lisa on the mug would look cool on your office table.



Size: D8.3 cm x H9.5 cm
Price: 12 yuan
Available: <http://shop33680239.taobao.com/>

Sony Ericsson Memorial Code Box

The Da Vinci Code box is a good place to store your treasures. The box is another classic souvenir released by Sony Ericsson: bronze surface, delicately carved, with black silk and wool

inside. The Da Vinci Code logo appears on the cover.

Size: 22.8 x 7.8 x 7.8cm
Price: 48 yuan
Available: <http://shop33670658.taobao.com/>



Zippo

Like all the Zippo family members, the Da Vinci Code Zippo is windproof, plain and practical. Only the surface reflects its artistic spark. Watching this Zippo, have you found yourself standing in the dark hall of Louvre Museum in the first chapter of the book?

Price: 135 yuan
Available: <http://shop33345504.taobao.com/>

By Wang Xiaoyuan

Hatsune: the best place to treat close friends

By Chu Meng

The sushi at Hatsune, south of the Kerry Center in Beijing's Guanghua Lu, is really spectacular. Though it is not the oldest or most fashionable Japanese restaurant in Beijing, it has built up a good reputation through word-of-mouth.

Hatsune's city-center loca-

tion, the decor, the food, and the moderate prices (not wildly expensive like really upscale ones, not cheap like sushi buffets), make it the most suitable place to treat your business partners or close friends. A lunch for two costs 200-250 yuan on average.

The chef's locally adapted

sushi dishes are its specialty. Inside 'wasabi-mayo green rolls' is deep-fried tuna, nori, green lettuce, sushi rice, topped with meguro, roe, a mixture of wasabi and mayonnaise, and deep-fried green onions, which deliver a delicious crisp sensation in the mouth. It is served on a bulldog sauce (Japanese sauce similar to

Worcestershire sauce).

These 'dragon rolls' at Hatsune contain cooked soft-shell crab meat, lettuce, nori, and are topped with cleverly cut salmon and tuna.

Hatsune:

Where: Guanghua Dong Lu, Heqiao Dasha C. 4 blocks east

of Kerry Centre, opposite Petro China building, northeast Chaoyang

Open: 11:30am-2pm and 5-10pm

Tel: 6581-3939

Cost: Meal for two people, 200 yuan - 250 yuan; Mon-Fri, set lunch, 65 yuan; weekend lunch buffet 150 yuan

Takewaka

By Tom Mackenzie

Laying claim to the largest restaurant-based fishpond in Beijing, Takewaka makes a point of trying to stand out from the crowd.

The chef at this swish Japanese chain restaurant – the first to open its doors in China – has over 40 years of fish-slicing sushi experience with a celebrity like status back home, whipping up dishes for dignitaries and VIPs.

He imports all his fish, around 12 species in all, from Japan and Taiwan, serving up sushi rolls (20-55 yuan), tempura (50-60 yuan) and kaiseki course meals (260-450 yuan). The tuna and salmon rolls were good - the rice perfectly cooked and the fish flesh soft and fresh.

A stewed tuna kaiseki course meal proved an excellent choice; the fish cooked in a sweet brown sauce and served with miso soup. Takewaka's chef claims to "understand the emotions" of fish, cutting into them with a care and precision he believes "preserves their soul".

But that's probably little comfort to the restaurant's signature living sashimi dish (550 yuan) – the fish is served on a bed of ice, its mouth gaping and tail twitching as you dip its sashimi slices into shoyu.

Takewaka is fast becoming a favorite lunchtime haunt for Beijing's business community. It remains to be seen whether it will be a hit with the city's sushi connoisseurs, but with fish that's fresher than fresh and a soul-searching celebrity chef it's on the right track.

Takewaka

Where: 5/F, Twin Towers, 25 Yonganli Zhongjie, Jianguomenwai, Chaoyang Open: 11am-2pm, 5:30-10:30pm. Tel: 5120 8881



Above photos provided by Hatsune



Photo provided by Matsuko

How to eat sushi properly

Wasabi

Wasabi (the green paste) tastes somewhat like horseradish. Some people mix a little Wasabi into the soy sauce; however, even though the Wasabi is there on your plate, it's really considered bad manners to do this, because the sushi chef has already placed some Wasabi on the rice roll. If you add more Wasabi you are essentially telling the chef that he or she did not do a good job.

Soy sauce vs. Ponzu sauce

Try asking for Ponzu sauce instead of the regular soy sauce next time. Ponzu is a Japanese sauce made with lemon juice or rice vinegar, soy sauce, Mirin and/or sake, Kombu (seaweed) and dried bonito flakes (Katsuobushi). Ponzu sauce is used as a dipping sauce with dishes as well as for sashimi.

Fingers

Fingers are OK, since sushi was invented as a finger food. Also, when ordering sushi, you usually should start with the leaner, whiter cuts of fish before moving on to darker, more fatty cuts.

(By Chu Meng)



Photo provided by Hatsune

Sushi roll



Best sushi

Sushi Links

<http://www.sushilinks.com/>

Sushi Master

<http://sushi-master.com/index.html>

Matsuko: Most reasonable prices

By Chu Meng

As innumerable Japanese restaurants boom and bust across the city, few will be remembered. During this trend, Matsuko Japanese Restaurant has become one of the most popular sushi restaurants since its foundation in 1992 because of its really reasonable prices, especially its low profit buffet lunch.

Though it lacks the authenticity of that Japanese cuisine by training local chefs and making most purchases domestically, its serious attitude towards serving the best dishes ensures a delicate meal. It is a good place to head to after work to liberate you from your sushi and sashimi cravings, or to treat family members.

In Beijing, Matsuko was the

first to offer a Japanese style buffet lunch and it quickly became popular. It really stimulates your appetite for the over 60 dishes, including the fresh cold raw fish, broiled river eel with teri yaki sance, deep fried shrimps, all kinds of sushi rolls, healthy combinations of salad, selective cooked dishes, toasted dishes, desserts, as well as seasonal fruits. It releases you from your original simple and boring lunch pattern.

The manager Fang Ming said "we do not intend to make money off the buffet service. The purpose was only to attract popularity. For adults it is 68 yuan for each person. One serving of broiled eel with rice is the same price." For children who are smaller than 110 centimeters it is

free of charge; it is 38 yuan for children who are between 110 to 150 centimeters.

"The food for buffet is changed daily and follows the standard of the day. There can be a limited amount of sashimi, both in terms of quantity and variety, so please remember to reserve ahead of time," Fang said.

Matsuko

Where: No. 22 Yi, Baijia-zhuang, Chaoyang (6582 5208);

No. 225, Chaoyangbei road, Chaoyang (6509 8998/9); No. 39, Liangmaqiao road, Chaoyang (8453 4062/3)

Open: 11:30am-2pm, 5-10:30pm.

Buffet time: From Monday to Friday 11:30-14:00 Saturday and Sunday 11:00-14:30

How to order at a sushi bar

1. Ask the sushi chef to recommend the catch of the day, since sushi-grade fish is especially sensitive to seasonal changes.

2. Swim with the big guys by getting the basics down. Nigiri is fish that has been pressed onto rice mounds. Maki are sushi rolls wrapped in nori seaweed, and sliced; temaki are hand-rolled seaweed cones containing rice and fish. Sashimi is raw fish.

3. Keep in mind that an average person eats 10 to 12 pieces in one sitting. Nigiri usually comes two pieces to the order; Maki is sliced into six pieces. Begin with a few dishes and order more if you are still hungry.

4. Start with edamame (steamed and salted soybeans served in the shell), marinated seaweed salad, or miso soup if you'd like.

5. Order one or two types of Nigiri: hamachi (yellowtail), maguro (tuna), unagi (broiled eel) and saki (rice wine) are popular choices. Sushi is served with wasabi (a green, sinus-clearing horseradish paste) and soy sauce. Experiment to see which condiments you prefer.

(By Chu Meng)



A kind of Miao's traditional game, imitating two bulls sticking heads with each other with two wooden sticks

By Cookie Wu

Congjiang, the county on the southeastern border of Guizhou Province, is the transport hub for the minority villages in southeastern Guizhou.

In Congjiang, aside from dozens of undeveloped villages, there are three venerable and famed villages.

Gaozeng – the first village in Southeast Guizhou to achieve the status of a "cultural heritage area",

Xiaohuang – the home of the Dong folk song, and Biasha – my mysterious destination in Congjiang

Biasha – a lonely island of ethnic antiquity

Cookie Wu's Guizhou journey nears its final stage

Biasha history

Some 4,000 years ago, Chiyou, the ancestor of the Miao minority, was defeated in battle, so he led his army to the west of China, with one detachment of the army staying in Biasha. Maybe that explains why the men of Biasha are all good at martial arts, which is part of their tradition.

Special Miao customs

This group is quite different from other Miao groups in terms of clothing and daily life.

Biasha people belong to the Miao branch that is least affected by modern civilization. Even in the modern times, they still lead very traditional lives.

The local villagers' ethnic costumes are made and dyed (mostly in deep blue biotic dyes, egg white and pig's blood) in the traditional way, to make the textile shiny and waterproof.

Every article of the villagers' clothes is self-made, with almost the same design pattern, usually diamonds and lines, and most have an eggplant color. Some Biasha people do not wear shoes, even in winter.

There is a little secret about women's pleated skirts. Those with skirt hemlines with white insets are married woman. Others with hemlines as black as the skirts themselves are single girls.

The men there are also famous for their unique hairstyles. Like the men of the Qing Dynasty, Biasha men wear their long hair in braids. They shave around the outside with sickles, and leave the middle section in a ponytail, which is then coiled up atop the head. This ancient hairstyle has existed in Biasha for thousands of years.

Men are often seen carrying a claymore (type of sword) at the waist, and a hunting rifle over the shoulder, which remains a common ornament, though there are no longer many animals and birds to hunt.

Like woman's skirts, men's hemlines also hide a little secret. Notice that every man's hemline is embroidered at the back like little 'tails'. They are actually gifts from girls. Each tail shows that he has gained the heart of a girl. Just count the tails if you want to know who is the most popular man in the village.



A Miao boy

Transportation

Biasha village is about 7.5 kilometers away from Congjiang county town.

To go from the town you can hire a chuck chuck or walk through to the other side of a bridge then take a local mini-van.

Hiring a taxi from the coach station to Biasha will cost you 30 yuan at most.

I strongly recommend you to hike back to the county town. You will get to enjoy the fresh air and lush forest for at least an hour.

Accommodation

Staying over in Biasha is totally unnecessary, because Congjiang County town is only 7.5 kilometers away. Moreover, no decent hotels in Biasha are available. Along both sides of the road where Congjiang coach bus station is located you can find many hostels. The average price is around 20 yuan per person per night.

Food

Congjiang spiced pig is made from a kind of pig which never grows big and mainly eats the weeds in the mountain. Its flesh is naturally savory. It is said that this kind of pig is raised only in Congjiang. Don't miss out!

Some of the little restaurants have no menu. They will open the refrigerator and ask you to choose directly. Usually, the price for each dish is 6 to 8 yuan.



A foreign visitor experiencing a traditional Miao wedding



On the ancient village road



A Miao haircut

Unique fossilized lifestyle

A horizontal board is hanged above the entrance to Biasha Village, inscribed with 'China's First Village of Tribe Culture'. Whenever visitors arrive, a group of villagers with long guns will stop them outside the village, while another group loads a homemade cannon. In fact, they are preparing a special Miao welcoming ceremony for the visitors.

Only seven kilometers away from Congjiang County town, with the state highway 321 getting through, the 2,140 villagers, more like a tribe, seldom connect with the outside world. They lead a self-sufficient life in the hilly areas. Biasha is a place where ancient culture is completely protected. Antiquated wooden spinning wheels and looms, leisurely old people, the elusive local Miao language, here and there, every trace shows us that people here live a "men till and women weave" self-sufficient life and are quite satisfied with it.

Belief

In the Miao language Biasha means a place where trees flourish. Biasha villagers still burn incense under ancient trees on festivals to pray for bliss.

The ancient trees, including maples, firs, pines, and camphors, each hundreds of years old, have been protected as carriers of ancestor's spirits for generations.

No one dares to cut any branch of these ancient trees, even if it is dead. Anyone who cuts any branch will be penalized severely. They will have to give 60 kilograms of wine, meat and rice to fellow villagers. Penalties are also imposed in cases of crimes like theft, robbery or drug-taking, according to village rules.

As most of China's minorities carry on their traditional funeral ways, Miao people here still bury their dead, in firewood coffins. Firs of more than 60 years old are the only wood used for this purpose. Villagers plant trees for themselves or their descendants on hills every year.

Photos by Cookie Wu

Pulau Redang, a ruined paradise

By Yao Yuan

“Malaysia, truly Asia”, is the tourism slogan of Malaysia. It has been on screen around the world for some time. However, to refine it, you could say “Pulau Redang, truly Malaysia”. If tourists have to choose between Pulau Redang and Kuala Lumpur for their destination, most of them will pick Pulau Redang without any hesitation.

In local Malay, ‘Pulau’ means ‘Island’. More common Malay words used in place names and descriptions include: ‘tanjung’ (cape), ‘teluk’ (bay), ‘sungei’ (river), ‘kampung’ (village) and ‘pasir’ (sand or beach). Kuala as in Kuala Lumpur means ‘bank of the river’. Pulau Redang, located 45 kilometers off the coast of Kuala Terengganu, is the largest of a group of islands dotting the South China Sea off the Terengganu coast. It will take about 45 minutes to fly from Kuala Lumpur to the Island. Most tourists fly with Air Asia or Malaysia Airlines from Kuala Lumpur to Kuala Terengganu, then transfer from the airport by bus. Boats will drop people at the beach, they just need to jump into the shallow water, and wade to the silky beach in bare feet. What a Redang welcome!



Outdoor bar area beside Pasir Panjang



Old man and a tricycle



Pulau Redang Pasir Panjang and Laguna Resort



Mo Mo Tea Inn at Pasir Panjang, Pulau Redang

Divers' paradise

As one of the top 10 diver's paradises in the world, Pulau Redang offers all the essential elements that a diver requires. Sheltered within the marine park, the crystal clear water here is rich in marine life. At the moment when sunrays penetrate the sea, brilliant hues of coral, anemones and clams can be seen. This paradise island is perfect for snorkeling and scuba diving, the beauty of the underwater world is far beyond people's imagination. At Pasir Panjang, people don't even have to go to a remote area for snorkeling or diving, they just take a mask and snorkel. If bring some crumbs, you'll be surrounded with all kinds of fish. You could be frightened by a five foot reef shark. Don't worry, it's as harmless as Nemo.

Mo Mo Tea Inn

For Chinese, Pulau Redang may make more sense because of a Hong Kong romance movie *Summer Mo Mo Tea*, or in English, *Summer Holidays*. Summer and Mo Mo tea are two young people. Summer is a Hong Kong businesswoman and Mo Mo Tea is local Malay who manages a little hotel called ‘Mo Mo Tea Inn’ on Pasir Panjang. Each of owns half of the beach called Pasir Panjang. As a conventional romance movie, love blossoms between these two characters. You don't need to remember the details, but because of this movie, you'll be lured by the landscape and sea view of Pulau Redang.

The wooden house of Mo Mo Tea Inn is still there. A big resort rebuilt it after the movie, it is a major attraction. Actually it's become a gift shop, with Mo Mo Tea styled decoration. There's nothing special in the gift shop, some souvenirs and postcards. Of course, most of young tourists from the Chinese mainland and Hong Kong are happy to stand in front of the house for photos.



Crystal water and white sand beach

A marine park

No fishing is allowed within a 3.2 km radius of the island, as Pulau Redang is gazetted as a marine park. Fish and sea cucumbers are well protected, and thousands of species live in their Eden insouciantly. Notice that many kinds of fish and sea cucumber are considered delicacies in most Asian dishes.

Here's beauty under water, and here are also ruins beneath the surface of the sea. In tourist areas, there are more smashed coral reefs than live ones. Small pieces of white reef debris are spread across the sea bed.

Imagine an island with a seven by six kilometer area and more than 15 resorts and budget accommodation like camp sites. It means at least 2,000 people jump into the water each day. Few of those people know that coral is a very sensitive creature, and might be killed with a simple touch. Over excited tourists, especially those first-time snorkelers, would easily neglect warnings of their mentor: don't step on, or break reefs. Some reefs are so easily reached. For those coral reefs located next to the beach, people can step on them without noticing with the ebb of the tide.

Sea turtles

Pulau Redang is also famous because of sea turtles. It is one of the habitats of sea turtles in the Indian and Pacific Oceans. Turtles can often be spotted in Pulau Redang while snorkeling or diving, and it is always an exciting experience to encounter one. But sea turtles are fast becoming a rare sight in Redang waters. It's understandable that nobody would like to swim where diesel boats come back and forth frequently. Sea turtles feel the same way. Even for those humans who go kayaking, it is also annoying that at around 300 yards out of the bay, leaking diesel oil from those commuter boats of resorts covers the sea surface. Holes in the kayak and splashing can let the oil-water mixture onto your body and hair. It can take you half hour to clean up.

Sunrise Pasir Panjang



Photos by Yao Yuan

Over-the-counter whitening products: Are they safe?

Your wedding is coming up and you want your smile to be its brightest. Or maybe you have an important speaking engagement. Whatever the reason, tooth bleaching isn't just for the movie stars, and it isn't just for one day. Many people have had their teeth bleached, and probably millions more are thinking about it. The desire for a brighter smile with whiter teeth is very strong, and tooth bleaching safely lightens the color of the teeth, lasting for up to five years.

Are over-the-counter teeth whitening products safe? How do their results compare with whitening products used at the dentist?

When used as directed on healthy teeth, over-the-counter (OTC) teeth whitening products are generally safe and effective. Side effects are few, and usually temporary, but may include sensitive teeth and gum irritation.

According to the American Dental Association (ADA), 'teeth whitening' is any process that makes teeth appear whiter, either by lightening teeth or by removing stains and discoloration from teeth. There are two types of teeth whitening products available for use at home:

Whitening toothpastes. All

toothpastes contain mild abrasives that help remove surface stains on teeth. But 'whitening' toothpastes have gentle chemical or polishing agents that provide additional surface stain removal. These products contain no bleach.

Peroxide-based whiteners or bleaching agents, including whitening gels and strips. These products bleach teeth - which means they actually change the natural tooth color - helping to remove deep and surface stains. Over-the-counter whitening products usually contain a lower strength of bleaching agent than do products used in your dentist's office. For this reason, they must be used longer to achieve the desired effect. But they are

also cheaper.

Whitening effects from OTC products typically last several months. But this can vary depending on:

- Your current and desired tooth color;
- Foods and beverages you consume; and
- How well you take care of your teeth.

Teeth whitening products are not recommended for:

- Pregnant women or women who are breast-feeding;
- Children younger than age 16;
- People with sensitive teeth or peroxide allergy; and
- People with gum disease or worn tooth enamel.

General concerns

Is it for me?

Tooth whitening is becoming more and more popular, particularly with the availability of the bleaching kits for do-it-yourself treatment. But before investing in one of them, we suggest checking with your dentist to find out whether whitening is appropriate for you. According to the American Dental Association, you're likely to get the best results if your teeth are yellowish. Bleaching doesn't work as well on teeth that have a naturally brown or gray hue.

It depends on what goes through

Tooth whitening, whether you do it yourself or have it done by your dentist can brighten teeth stained as a result of drinking coffee, tea, soda or red wine as well as teeth darkened as a result of aging and those stained as a result of smoking cigarettes and chewing tobacco. However, if you have had bonding or have tooth-colored fillings in your front teeth, the whitening won't 'take' on those materials.

DIY at home

At-home bleaching solutions use carbamide peroxide as the bleaching agent. While this is generally considered safe, you may notice some tooth sensitivity while using it. For example, over time bleaching might break down the integrity of the teeth, leaving them porous and more susceptible to future stains.

Safety

Another concern: there's a chance that the bleach could travel through a deep cavity to a tooth's root and set off a toothache or trigger an infection. Bleaching could also result in some soft-tissue shrinkage among people with periodontal disease. Beyond that, we don't yet have long-term safety data on these products.

Chlorine

As far as the chlorine in water is concerned, it isn't relevant. The low levels of chlorine in drinking water are there to kill germs and have nothing to do with the color of our teeth.



Whiten your smile

How can you brighten your smile at dentist's?

The most effective and safest method of tooth bleaching is dentist-supervised.

Is bleaching for you?

Generally, bleaching is successful in at least 90 percent of patients, though it may not be an option for everyone. Teeth darkened yellow, brown or orange respond better to lightening. Other types of gray stains caused by fluorosis, smoking or tetracycline are lightened, but results are not as dramatic. If you have very sensitive teeth, periodontal disease, or teeth with worn enamel, your dentist may discourage bleaching.

What's involved?

First, the dentist will determine whether you are a candidate for tooth bleaching and what type of bleaching system would provide the best results.

If you're in a hurry for whiter teeth, you may decide to have your teeth lightened immediately. Your dentist will use either an in-

office bleaching system or laser bleaching while you sit in the dental chair. However, most patients choose dentist-supervised at-home bleaching, which is more economical and provides the same results.

At the next appointment if you don't choose laser bleaching, the dentist or hygienist will make impressions of your teeth to fabricate a mouthguard appliance for you. The mouthguard is custom made for your mouth and is lightweight so that it can be worn comfortably while you are awake or sleeping. The mouthguard is so thin that you should even be able to talk and work while wearing your mouthguard. Along with the mouthguard, you'll receive the bleaching materials. You'll be given instructions on how to wear the mouthguard.

Some bleaching systems recommend bleaching your teeth from two to four hours a day. Generally this type of system

requires three to six weeks to complete, and works best on patients with sensitive teeth. Other systems recommend bleaching at night while you sleep. This type of system usually requires only 10-14 days to complete.

How does it work?

The active ingredient in most of the whitening agents is 10 percent carbamide peroxide ($\text{CH}_3\text{N}_2\text{O}_2$), also known as urea peroxide; when water contacts this white crystal, the release of hydrogen peroxide lightens the teeth.

What are realistic expectations?

No one can really predict how much lighter your teeth will become. Every case is different. Typically, there is a two-shade improvement as seen on a dentist's shade guide. The success rate depends upon the type of stain involved and your compliance. Bleaching can only provide

a shift in color from gray to a lighter shade of gray, for example. Bleaching does not lighten artificial materials such as resins, silicons, or porcelains.

Is it safe? Any side effects?

Several studies, during the past five years, have proven bleaching to be safe and effective. The American Dental Association has granted its seal of approval to some tooth bleaching products. Some patients may experience slight gum irritation or tooth sensitivity, which will resolve when the treatment ends.

How long does it last?

Lightness should last from one to five years, depending on your personal habits such as smoking and drinking coffee and tea. At this point you may choose to get a touch up. This procedure may not be as costly because you can probably still use the same mouthguard. The retreatment time also is much shorter than the original treatment time.

(By Chu Meng)

Stage in July

The Red Operas



Six classical red operas, including Sister Jiang, The White-haired Girl, Liu Hulan.

When: July 1

Where: Great Hall of the People
Admission: 120-600 yuan

Opera – Good Bye My Lover

Who: The Chinese East Song and Dance Troupe
When: July 1-2
Where: Poly Theatre, 14 Dongzhimen Nandajie, Dongcheng
Admission: 85-885 yuan

The Nutcracker puppet show



Who: The China Puppet Art Troupe
When: July 1-16
Where: China Puppet Theater, Anhuaxili, Chaoyang
Admission: 30-240 yuan

Drama – I Can't Decide Now



Who: The Beijing People's Art Troupe
When: July 7-31
Where: Beijing People's Art Theater, 22 Wangfujing Dajie, Dongcheng
Admission: 60-280 yuan

Concert – Voice of an Angel

Who: The Canadian Columbia Child's Voice Choir
When: July 15-16
Where: Poly Theatre, 14 Dongzhimen Nandajie, Dongcheng
Admission: 50-480 yuan

Army Songs



Who: Army singers including; Nie Jianhua, Dong Yong, Cheng Zhi and Pan Shuzhen.
When: July 31
Where: Beijing Concert Hall, 1 Beixinhuajie, Xicheng
Admission: 80-680 yuan

Friday, June 2

Music

Live show by the world famous dance music band Infusion



Where: Tango Club, 79 Hepingli Xijie, Dongcheng

When: 8 pm-2 am

Tel: 6428 2288

Exhibition

Tranquility and Love – Ziqi and Zhiqi's oil painting exhibition



Where: New Millennium Gallery, 3818 Warehouse, 2 Jiuxianqiaolu, Chaoyang

When: until June 22

Admission: Free

Tel: 6432 4122

Jams

Beijing underground rock band show



Where: Nameless Highland, 14 Anhui Yayuncun, Chaoyang

When: 7 pm

Admission: 30-40 yuan

Tel: 6489 1613, 6491 2122

Poets Sailors Saints – Sound System Party



Where: Yugong Yishan, Chunxiulu Gongti Beilu, Chaoyang

When: 10 pm

Admission: 30 yuan

Tel: 6415 0687

Saturday, June 3

Movies

The Da Vinci Code

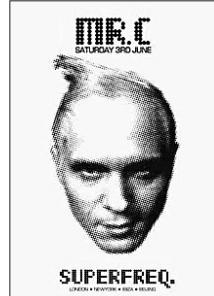


Famed symbologist Robert Langdon is called to the Louvre museum in Paris where a curator has been murdered, leaving behind a mysterious trail of symbols and clues. Aided by police cryptologist Sophie Neveu, they unveil a series of stunning secrets hidden in the works of Leonardo Da Vinci.

Where: Cineplex around Beijing
When: until the middle of June
Admission: 30-120 yuan

Jams

Electronic House Music Party



By the World Top 15 DJ Mr. C
Where: Club Cargo, West Gate of the Workers' Stadium, Gongti Xilu Chaoyang

When: 9 pm

Admission: 90-120 yuan

Tel: 6530 2899

Exhibition

Sicily: A continent with 5,000 years of history



The exhibition will illustrate thousands of years of Sicilian history and artistic production, ranging from the Paleolithic period to the Byzantine Era, from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance and Baroque periods.

Where: Beijing National Museum, Tian An Men Square, Dongcheng

When: until June 27

Admission: 30 yuan

Tel: 6512 8901

Sunday, June 4

Movies

Poseidon



A luxury cruise ship in the middle of the North Atlantic Ocean rapidly fills with water, a small group of survivors find themselves unlikely allies in a battle for their lives, each must draw on skills and strengths they don't even know they possess, fighting against time for their own survival and for each other.

Where: Cineplex around Beijing
When: until the end of June
Admission: 30-120 yuan

Activity

A walk from Auspicious Village

What to see: As well as the Great Wall, the walk will include three different villages. A great opportunity to see some real hidden corners of China and witness rural Chinese life.

Where: Huairou County
When: 8 am, from Starbucks, Lido
Admission: 200 yuan, 150 yuan for Children under 12
Tel: 139 100 25516

Jams

Beat party with Jonathan 'Shortcut' Cruz



Where: Club Mix, inside the Workers' Stadium Gongti Beilu, Chaoyang

When: 9:30 pm

Tel: 6530 2889

Exhibition

A collection spanning 250 years at the British Museum



Where: Capital Museum, Muxidi Xi Changanjie, Xicheng
When: until June 5
Admission: 50 yuan
Tel: 6337 0491

(By Lu Xiaonan)

Reader competition

Five lucky readers can each win an IPL hair removal session worth 1,000 yuan.

Read the following paragraph, answer the question below and email your answer to btcompetition@ynet.com before 12pm on Wednesday June 7 2006.

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injections/derma fillers you can look younger and more refreshed.

For more information contact: (010) 6503 5707, or visit: www.bioscor.com.cn

Question:

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- Skin Management
- Anti-Ageing
- Cosmetic Surgery

Photo-rejuvenation

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Hair Removal

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Thread lift

A mini non-surgical facelift where no skin is cut away. Targets problem areas using a minimally invasive procedure, using threads under the skin.

Bioscor International Beijing Clinic

Room 1008, e-Tower building, (opposite Kerry Centre)
No.12, Guang Hua Rd. Chao Yang District, Beijing 100020, China
email: beijing@bioscor.com.cn [Open 10 am - 6pm]

朝阳区光华路丙12号数码01大厦1008室(嘉里中心对面)

30% off

Hong Kong grub

Four Seasons Hong Kong style restaurant (1 Andinglu, west gate of Olympic Sport Center, Chaoyang) is offering a 30 percent discount on all its dishes, except seafood, until the end of June. For details, call 6493 1870



20% off

Old Beijing Style Bar

Jia Shi Hao (10, Andelu Dongcheng) is an old Beijing style bar offering a range of alcoholic and soft drinks. There is a 20 percent discount on all bills over 100 yuan until July 15. For details, call 6451 1691



12% off

Shanghai Flavor

Bu Yi Hou Congee Restaurant (141 Xizhimenwai Dajie, Xicheng) serves up food with a Shanghai flavor including: Shengjianbao, Xiaolongbao and noodles. There is a 12 percent discount on all flour-made food. For details, call 8838 3636

10% off

Viojoy Restaurant

The Viojoy Restaurant (Zi Yue Can Ting, No.2 Building, Beijing Capital International Airport, Shunyi District) is a Chinese restaurant that serves up dinner and snacks. This month all dishes there will be discounted by 10 percent. For details, call 6459 0828

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How to write a perfect resume?

By Han Manman

Do you know what employers look for in a resume?

Tomorrow (June 3) 80 students will compete to win an internship with a Fortune 500 company.

They have been selected from 1,000 applicants to take part in the 'Super Intern' competition organized by New House International Education Consulting.

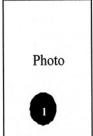
Eight of the best and brightest university students will be

selected for the competition final next week.

Roc Hu, who has worked for a well-known Fortune 500 company and has lectured in the 35 top universities about the methods of resume writing, will judge

the student's resumes.

He has already scrapped 800 of the worst resumes. Below he goes through a typical example of a badly written resume and explains what is wrong with it and how it can be improved.

 Photo	LI YAN
Personal Information: 2 Date of birth: August 22, 1982 Sex: Room #, Building # Peking University (100087) Phone Numbers: 5276### 1381027### email address: ****@gmail.com	
Double :	
Bachelor in Economics 2005 China Center for Economic Research of Peking University	
EDUCATION Sep.2002 - July.2005 PEKING UNIVERSITY China Center for Economic Research Bachelor in Economics Main Courses: International Trade, Accounting, Marketing, Econometrics, Microeconomics,....	
3 Sep.2001 - July.2005 PEKING UNIVERSITY English Department Bachelor in English Literature Main Courses: Intensive Reading for English Majors, English listening Comprehension, Oral English, Writing for Practical Purposes, Argumentative English-Chinese Translation,....	
4 The Second Foreign Language: French	
Scholarships: 2001-2002 Orient Overseas Container Line Ltd. Scholarship; 2002-2003 Orient Overseas Container Line Ltd. Scholarship; 2003-2004 Orient Overseas Container Line Ltd. Scholarship.	
Awards: 2001-2002 Outstanding Student in Academy, Morality and Health (the "Three Goods" Student) of Peking University;	
SOCIAL PRACTICE 7 Editor of Muse , the magazine of School of Foreign Languages, Peking University; Member of ACDR (PKU Association for Career Development Research) and a participant in the "Olympic Research" Activity.	
SKILLS 8 • (Language) English (orally fluent, and I have got a full score in the writing test of TOEFL and a 5.5 score in the Test of Written English of GRE while the full mark is 6); Mandarin (I have several literary essays that were published in the provincial newspapers or in Muse); French (not very fluent). • (IT Skills) Able to use the office software (Word, PowerPoint, etc.) and the statistical software of Stata proficiently. Proficient at typing as well. • (Driving Skills) I have my own driver's license.	
Self-Description:	



Hu's suggestions:

1. DONT add your photo unless required.

2. DONT include personal information, such as age, race, religious affiliations, marital or health status. Omit any information that could be used in a dis-

criminatory way.

3. DONT avoid career objectives (unless you know very well what is available and what you want).

4. DONT list every class you've had in your major. (List

4-6 classes that are advanced or show diversity in your background.)

5. DONT make your reader dig for information.

6. DONT list awards but stress them as unique

7. Here's a boring description of an achievement in Yan Li's resume: "participant in the 'Olympic Research' Activity." What does that tell an employer specifically about your problem-solving talents or leadership abilities? Not much. (As a candidate, you must communicate quickly what each achievement says about you.)

8. DONT write in complete sentences and be too formal.

9. Self-description is of no importance because more attention is paid to your professional experience and educational backgrounds. Therefore, you would do better to focus on the experience you have gained and your qualities.

6. Title of the Award (awarded to top *** % Students) Twice

7. Be specific in describing your special skills; name computer programs you know, how long you studied a foreign language, or your dates of military service.

8. **One page vs. two pages?**

99 percent of students should have a one-page resume. Remember that most employers will only look at your resume for 15-30 seconds.

9. **How to write your employment history**

For each job, you want to showcase (1) what you were expected to do and (2) what you accomplished. You do this by combining what you wrote in your employment history and achievement stories document. One of the most effective formats for summarizing jobs on a resume is to state responsibilities simply, and follow with achievement in a bulleted list.

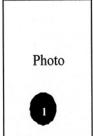
An effective way to describe an achievement is to tell it in this order:

Problem: What was the key problem(s) you faced?

Action: What actions did you take to overcome the problem?

Result: What was the result of your efforts, and how did your performance benefit the company?



 Photo	Yan LI (李燕)
Room #, Building # Peking University (100087) (+86-10) 5276### (+86) 138-1027### ****@gmail.com	
PROFESSIONAL OBJECTIVE A position in Administrative Assistant providing the opportunity to make a strong contribution to organizational goals through continued development of professional skill. 2	
QUALIFICATIONS PROFILE Be familiar with the knowledge of International Trade, Accounting and Commercial Bank; master the use of English and Chinese, and to be a good people person and team player. 3	
EDUCATION Sep.2001 - Jul.2005 Peking University B.A. in English Literature English Department GPA: 3.93/4 Main Courses: Intensive Reading, Listening Comprehension, Oral English, Writing for Practical Purposes, Argumentative Writing, English-Chinese Translation, Chinese-English Interpretation, Chinese-English Translation.	
Sep.2002 - Jul.2005 Peking University B.A. in Economics China Center for Economic Research(CCER) Beijing GPA: 3.94/4 Main Courses: International Trade, Accounting, Marketing, Econometrics, Intermediate Microeconomics, Intermediate Macroeconomics, Calculus, Linear Algebra, Probability and Statistics.	
Sep.2003 - Jul.2004 Peking University Beijing The Second Foreign Language: French (one year)	
WORK EXPERIENCE Oct.2004 - Present Project Manager in New House International Education Consulting Co. Ltd. Take charge of Overseas Study Consulting Department Draft the marketing strategy with marketing director, including TV, newspaper and internet strategies; execute the plan successfully and boost sales by 28% Conduct a systematic research on competitors and give competitive strategy suggestions Interview and correspond with celebrities such as Xu, GuoqingM (MBA of Harvard), Du, Jingtao (CEO of Rolandchub; President of Business School in Chicago University), and Zheng, Yunduan (HR director of P&G Tech Co.Ltd.) Arrange the lectures on Job Hunting Consulting Coordinate the work between different departments 9	
SCHOLARSHIPS & HONORS 2002, 2003, 2004 Orient Overseas Container Line Ltd. Scholarship (Awarded to Top 1% students) 2002, 2003 Outstanding Student in Academy, Morality at PKU (Awarded to Top 1% students) 2004 The Most Outstanding Student in Three Aspects at PKU (Awarded to Top 0.5% students)	
ENGLISH TESTS & IT SKILLS 7 TOEFL: 653 TWE: 6/6 TEM 4 (Test for English Majors, Grade 4): Excellence TEM 8: to be taken in March, 2005 Learned French for a whole academic year, can communicate others but not freely Proficient at Office Software and the statistic software of Stata	
OTHER INFO. 8 Prep. Member of Chinese Communist Party.	



The important points for a good resume:

1. Contact Information Section provides information to help prospective employers contact you, which is usually located at the top of the page to create a good first impression.

2. Tell the employer the field(s) of work for which you want to be considered. You can specify by job function (librarian, social worker, etc.), or by work area (finance, public relations, production, etc.).

3. A summary of relevant skills, knowledge and accomplishments. If it is well written, this section can really help a potential employer to focus on your strengths.

4. Be sure to include higher education degrees and certificates, academic awards or scholarships, relevant courses and professional credentials. Sometimes, it may also benefit you to include your GPA and/or rank in class. (Only include it if you think it will help sell yourself to an employer.)

5. Important titles should be emphasized with fonts & styles such as bold, italic, and underlines.

6. Title of the Award (awarded to top *** % Students) Twice

7. Be specific in describing your special skills; name computer programs you know, how long you studied a foreign language, or your dates of military service.

Nottingham University seeks ever-closer ties with China

By Chen Shasha



President Colin Campbell

As one of Britain's top universities, Nottingham has close ties with China. In February 2006, the Deputy Prime Minister of Britain, John Prescott, along with Madame Chen Zhili, a state counsellor, officially opened Nottingham University's China campus in Ningbo, Zhejiang province.

Below, we interview Nottingham University president Colin Campbell.

Q: How many Chinese students are there at Nottingham University?

A: The University of Nottingham has always prided itself on having a large Chinese student population and today we have 1037 Chinese students studying at our campus in the UK. In addition to this we have over 900 Chinese students at our overseas campuses in China and in Malaysia.

Q: Are scholarships available and, if so, which students can apply for them?

A: The International Office in the UK offers innovative and generous scholarship packages. Each year we offer a wide range of different schemes across all the faculties and schools to support students from a large number of countries. Our Nottingham China Science Scheme offers full tuition fee scholarships, as do the scholarships we offer through the Chevening Scheme, the Dorothy Hodgkin's Scheme and other subject-specific International Office scholarships. The University also has an excellent success rate with nationally competitive scholarships such as the Overseas Research Scholarship scheme (ORS).

Q: Two of Nottingham's professors were awarded the Nobel prize for their work in economics and medicine. What does that say about those departments at the university? And how do other faculties compare?

A: Professor Sir Peter Mansfield, an internationally respected physicist, was recently jointly awarded the Nobel Prize for Medicine (MRI) and it was at Nottingham that he carried out the pioneering work that earned him the award. The University was also recently privileged to see another member of its Alumni honored with a Nobel Prize. Professor Clive Granger spent 22 years with us as an undergraduate, postgraduate and professor before moving to his current post at the University of California. Professor Granger was jointly awarded the Nobel Prize for Economic Science for his breakthrough work in analyzing economic time series with common trends (cointegration).



UP Millennium Garden



Jiao Tong University

The University's strengths lie across all of our six faculties. The latest Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) confirmed the University of Nottingham's position as a world class research-led institution. Over 60% of The University's RAE scores identified research as being of a level of international excellence. This achievement has helped put Nottingham within the Sunday Times top 10 UK universities.

The University of Nottingham is also one of the leading UK universities to figure in the Top 100 of the world rankings lists published by the Times Higher Education Supplement, and Shanghai

Q: Tell us more about the Ningbo branch of Nottingham University.

A: New Chinese legislation passed in March 2003 permitted the establishment of foreign university campuses in China, in partnership with Chinese institutions. The University of Nottingham is the first, and, so far, the only, foreign university to receive a license to establish a campus under this legislation.

Two years after 'start-up', there are over 900 students recruited to University of Nottingham standards.

All teaching is carried out in

English by staff either seconded from Nottingham or appointed internationally to University of Nottingham standards. Degrees are University of Nottingham degrees, whether the student has studied in China or at the University's campus in Malaysia, or at Nottingham in the UK.

Indeed, it is central to the University's vision of international education that our students from the UK can "study abroad" in China (or Malaysia) and our students in China can "study abroad" for a semester or a year in Nottingham, UK, and take the same courses towards the same degrees.

The university is working to a target of 25 percent international students in Ningbo in order to create a truly international campus.

The University selected a partnership with the Wanli Education Group (WEG), and the campus is located in the historic and commercially booming seaport city of Ningbo, Zhejiang Province. Occupying a 144-acre site, the University has a £20 million (around 1.5 million yuan) campus, with facilities for 4,000 students in phase one, and land for a projected expansion to 8,000 students in phase two of the project.

International Business and Management, International Communications and International Studies, plus excellence in English as well as the opportunity to study foreign, especially European languages and western societies, will make a major contribution to the needs of the Chinese and international public and private sectors. New courses set for the 2007 entry include BA Communicative English, BA East Asian Studies and BA European Studies.

Tuition fees are approximately half of the international fee, and maintenance costs in China are considerably lower than in the UK.

The University is placing early emphasis on research and development, working to achieve a synergy between some of its research strengths and China's priorities and, in particular, those of the city of Ningbo and Zhejiang province. It has encouraged an emerging research and development relationship between the city of Nottingham and the East Midlands region and their counterparts in China, with a twinning agreement ready to progress, and it will explore areas of mutual benefit with companies UK-wide. The areas the university is concentrating on initially include sustainable development, global finance, comparative cultures, Asia-Pacific studies as well as learning sciences and pharmaceutical sciences.

Q: What do you look for in your students?

A: The students we prefer are the most intellectually able and the linguistically most effective. We want the best students from home and abroad and our teaching and research provision along with our provision for scholarships ensure that we attract these students. Our own students from China are a credit to their own country, have been very successful in, for example, attracting scholarships from national competitions and we are sure that they in turn are becoming a credit to this university returning to China as our alumni.

Photos provided by
Nottingham University

Next week:
Studying in the UK

► Follow Beijing Today

This column is open to those who want to improve their English but lack foreign specialized help. We will review the English articles you send to Shirley_chen@ynet.com. Suggestions will be given on how to improve the Chinglish sentences in your articles. All interesting stories are welcomed. Please be sure the article is written in English, around 500 words in total. Please do not forget to include your name and address.

DIY Dancing Party

By Liu Da

On the Christmas eve, our classmates who had boy or girl friends went out excitedly to spend their romantic night, in the dormitory, there only left the "single Aristocrats", but we did not feel lonely, some said that "we shouldn't make the precious night slip away!", we felt a little bit jealous of them, for this night, no rose, no chocolate, no prince, but we girls stayed together this night, then we decided to hold a provisional dancing party in dorm.

To say is easier than to do, for our poor small room, our dorm only had two aisles that could only allow one person to sidle through for each time. How could we hold party in this small room? Putting this problem aside, we, with Christmas excitement, made full use of our brains. First, we gathered all of our property: all kinds of fruits actually stored for a long time, tomatoes and cucumbers actually for losing weight, bread and biscuits actually for breakfast and our

favorite potato chips and melon seeds. Second is for sound effect. Of course, for English majored students, what we were rich in, undoubtedly, were radiograms. Each early morning, we took them to the garden of our school, we pulled antennas to its full length to receive the signal from BBC or VOA, we usually walked back and forth, lowered our heads, stared at the ground logily, and tried our best to listen, some persons said that looking us from distance, it seemed that we were not listening to the radio but seemed like sweeping mines, each guy is from FBI. But now these ugly little machines could play a big role for our party, we place them respectively at each corner of our dorm; we open them at the same time and on the same channel, so this music effect could be no better than the effect of the



Liu Da, a student of Beijing University of Technology

Photo provided by Liu Da

surround sound of the high-level appliance.

The party's atmosphere was rising. Foods, music, were all prepared, we shouted out, with one voice: "Let's party!" Under the daylight lamp, we danced with the music, but it seemed really awkward, the bright light made us a little shy, and the dancing movement seemed unnatural. How to create a professional disco atmosphere? Dolly, one of our smart girls, said: "open the reading lamps and turn off the lights!" she held one reading lamp and swayed it, then another 3 girls found their lamps, they swayed them together. It did work! The disordered lights really made us comfortable; some of them even put color paper on top of the lamps, our DIY neon lights were born! This really perfect party had been created; we dance, sing and shout, the whole room was full of happiness, passion and craziness. We knew this is the night full of freedom without any limitations, even the little room could not stop us dancing. A girl named Ada got excited, and jumped on the table, regardless of the poor little room, she made a great dance, and we all called her: the princess of tonight.

The next day, one boy from our class asked me what was going on in your dorm, he said he saw through the window there were some ghost fires, and he also heard ghost cries from our room. I answered proudly: "Nothing, just the Santa's presents!"



John Gordon, vice chancellor of the New Channel Language School of Beijing

Photo provided by John Gordon

colons or dashes. Take as an example the sentence in the second paragraph that begins with "Early each morning", and ends with "FBI". This is an example of what we call a run-on sentence, because it contains many ideas strung together without the proper connectives or punctuation.

Many Chinese students think that the longer and more complex a sentence is the better it is, but this is not necessarily the case. In fact, simplicity is valued in modern English writing, and the most important thing is expressing your ideas clearly.

(By Chen Shasha)

Cop a load of this



By Philip Space

These community police signs can be seen in housing blocks throughout the city. Unfortunately, the poorly worded English detracts from the serious message that Beijing's police department is trying to get across. A native English speaker is more likely to laugh at the sight of this sign than pay it any serious attention.

Punish severely all sorts of crimes

In this sentence the word order is wrong and there is no subject. The word choice also makes it difficult to know what

the writer means. This may be a better way to phrase it:

We severely punish people for any number of crimes.

Further down, the sign reads:

Please make the temporary registration by the jianwai police station within 24 hours after your arrival.

This would be better worded as follows:

Please temporarily register at the Jianwai police station within 24 hours of your arrival.

It's a dog's life



By Philip Space

The picture on this sign makes it pretty clear what is intended but the words below are a jumbled mess.

Forbid pets enter

Here, the word order is confused, a preposition is missing and the verb endings and tenses are wrong.

It should be written:

Pets are forbidden from entering

John Gordon's comments

First of all, it's worth noting that this is a very creative piece, and it tells a story that is quite engaging to the reader. That said, there are some specific errors that could be classified as "Chinglish", and some broader errors that, if avoided, could make the piece read more like natural English.

Let's start with some of the specific errors. In the first sentence, the author refers to "the Christmas eve," but in English we don't add "the" when referring to holidays. Also, both "Christmas", and "Eve" should be capitalized. In the same sentence, the author refers to "boy or girl friends" to mean people who are dating, but in English writing "girl friend" normally means "a friend who is a girl", and "girlfriend" would mean "a girl who one is dating".

Also in the first paragraph, "we shouldn't make the precious night slip away!", should read "we shouldn't let the precious night slip away!" While both "let" and "make" can be translated as "rang" in Chinese, "make" has a meaning similar to "force", and "let" has a meaning similar to "allow". So you could say, "Mom, please don't make me do my homework", or "Mom, please let me go out and play with my friends".

In the second paragraph the author uses the word "radio-gram", which is a fairly archaic

Before Sunset

DYING INSIDE

CELINE: I was thinking, for me it's better I don't romanticize things as much anymore. I was suffering so much all the time. I still have lots of dreams, but they're not in regard to⁽¹⁾ my love life. It doesn't make me sad, it's just the way it is.

JESSE: Is that why you're in a relationship with somebody who's never around?

CELINE: Yes, obviously I can't deal with the day-to-day life of a relationship. Yeah, we have, you know, this exciting time together and then he leaves and I miss him, but at least I'm not dying inside. When someone's always around me, I'm like suffocating⁽²⁾!

JESSE: No, wait, you just said that you need to love and be loved...

CELINE: Yeah, but when I do, it quickly makes me nauseous⁽³⁾! It's a disaster. I mean, I'm really happy only when I'm on my own. Even being alone, it's better than sitting next to a lover and feeling lonely. It's not so easy for me to be a romantic. You start off that way, and after you've been screwed over⁽⁴⁾ a few times, you...you forget about all your delusional⁽⁵⁾ ideas and you just take what comes into your life. That's not even true, I haven't been screwed over, I've just had too many blah⁽⁶⁾ relationships. They weren't mean, they cared for me, but there were no real connection or excitement. At least, not from my side.

JESSE: God, I'm sorry, is it...Is it really that bad? It's not, right?

CELINE: You know...it's not even that, I was...I was fine until I read your fucking book. It stirred shit up you know? It reminded me how genuinely romantic I was, how I had so much hope in things and, now it's like I don't believe in anything that relates to love, I don't feel things for people anymore. In a way, I put all my romanticism into that one night and I was never able to feel all this again. Like, somehow this night took things away from me and I expressed them to you, and you took them with you. It made me feel cold, like if love wasn't for me.

JESSE: I... I don't believe that. I don't believe that.

CELINE: You know what? Reality and love are almost contradictory⁽⁷⁾ for me. It's funny...every single of my ex-es, they're now married. Men go out with me, we break up, and then they get married. And later they call me to thank me for teaching them what love is, and that I taught them to care and respect women.

JESSE: I think I'm one of those guys.

CELINE: You know, I want to kill them! Why didn't they ask me to marry them? I would have said 'No', but at least they could have asked! But it's my fault, I know it's my fault, because I never felt it was the right man. Never! But what does it mean, the right man, the love of your life? The concept is absurd. The idea that we can only be complete with another person, it's evil, right?

JESSE: Can I talk?

CELINE: You know, I guess I've been heartbroken too many times and then I recovered. So now, you know, from the start, I make no effort. Because I know exactly it's not gonna work out.

JESSE: You can't do that. You can't live your life trying to avoid pain at the expense...

CELINE: Ok, you know what? Lose our words! I've gotta... I've gotta get away from you...Stop the car, I want to get out!

JESSE: No, no, no, don't... don't get out... Keep talking...

CELINE: You know, it's being around you...Don't touch me.. You know, I wanna get out of the cab...Monsieur...Monsieur, aretes vous! Non, non, c'est bon, aux faux la!

JESSE: No, no, no, don't, keep going...no, listen, I'm just so happy...thank you, just keep going... All right. Look, I'm just so happy, all right...to be with you. I am. I'm so glad you didn't forget about me, okay?

CELINE: No, I didn't. And it pisses me off⁽⁸⁾, okay? You come here to Paris, all romantic, and married. Okay? Screw you. Don't get me wrong, I'm not trying to get you, or anything. I mean, all I need is a married man! There's been so much water under

the bridge⁽⁹⁾, it's...it's not even about you anymore. It's about that time, that moment in time that is forever gone, I don't know.

JESSE: You... you say all that, but you didn't even remember having sex, so...

CELINE: Of course I remember it.

JESSE: You did?

CELINE: Yes! Women pretend things like that.

JESSE: They do?

CELINE: Yeah, what was I supposed to say? That I remember the wine in the park, and us looking about the stars fading away as the sun came up. We had sex twice, you idiot!

JESSE: All right, you know what? I'm just happy to see you, even if you've become an angry, maniac-depressive⁽¹⁰⁾ activist. I still like you, I still enjoy being around you.

CELINE: I feel the same. I'm sorry, I don't know what happened. I just...I had to let it all out. I...

JESSE: Don't worry about it.

CELINE: I'm so miserable in my love life, in my relationship, I always act as, like, you know, I'm detached, but I'm...I'm dying inside. I'm dying because I'm so numb⁽¹¹⁾, I don't feel pain, or excitement, I'm not even bitter, I'm just...

JESSE: You think you're the one dying inside. My life, is 24/7 bad.

CELINE: I'm sorry.

JESSE: No, no, no...I mean, the only happiness I get is when I'm out with my son. I've been to marriage counseling, I've done things I never thought I would have to do. I've lit candles, bought self-help books, lingerie⁽¹²⁾...

CELINE: Did the candles help?

JESSE: Hell, no! All right, I don't love her the way she needs to be loved, and I don't even see a future for us. But then I look at my little boy, sitting at the table across from me, I think I'd suffered any torture to be with him for all the minutes of his life. You know, I don't wanna miss out⁽¹³⁾ on one. But then, there's no joy or laughter in my home, you know, and I don't want him growing up in that!

CELINE: Oh, no laughter? That's terrible, my parents have been together for 35 years and even when they have a bad fight, they end up laughing like crazy.

JESSE: I don't wanna be one of those people who are getting divorced at 52, and falling down into tears, admitting that they never really loved their spouse, and they feel that their life has been sucked up into a vacuum cleaner! You know, I want a great life. I want her to have a great life. She deserves that. But we're just living in the pretense of a marriage, responsibility, you know and all this...just...ideas of how people are suppose to live.

Vocabulary:

(1) **in regard to:** = with regard to, have connection or relation to

(2) **suffocate:** to (cause to) die because of lack of air, either literally or emotionally

(3) **nauseous:** make someone feel sick

(4) **Screwed over:** when one person is deliberately taken advantage of, or cheated, by another

(5) **delusional:** likely to be deceived, misleading

(6) **Blah: empty talk:** nonsense

(7) **contradictory**
(for/to): contradicting; not in agreement

(8) **Pisses somebody off:** make someone exceedingly angry

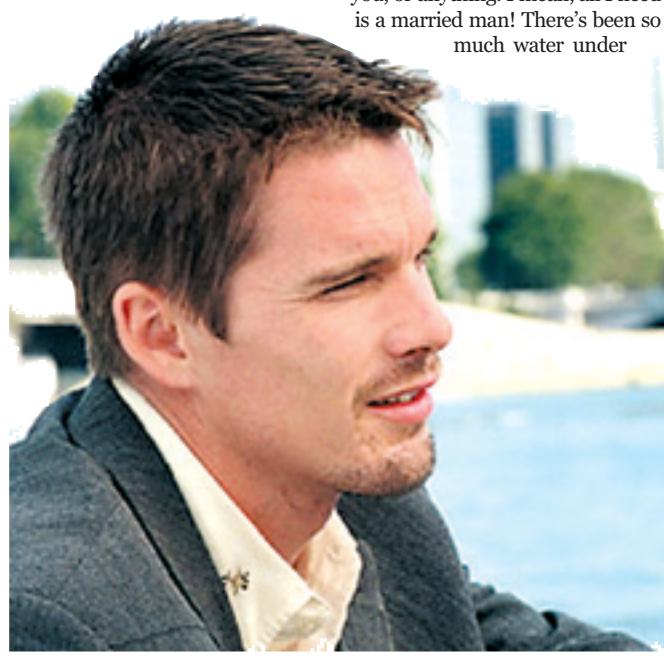
(9) **There's been so much water under the bridge:** so much time has passed that the old wounds have been healed

(10) **maniac-depressive:** (a person) suffering from continual changes of feeling, states of great joyful excitement being followed by sad hopelessness

(11) **numb:** unable to feel anything

(12) **lingerie:** sexually arousing undergarments for women

(13) **miss out:** to fail to include



Before Sunset (2004)

Starring:
Ethan Hawke
and
Julie Delpy

Director:
Richard Linklater

Synopsis:
Ethan Hawke and Julie Delpy make magic again, reprising their *Before Sunrise* roles of Jesse and Celine and reuniting with director Richard Linklater in this engaging tale of love and renewal. When Jesse and Celine first met in the mid 1990s, their few hours together in Vienna were spontaneous and life-altering, and nine years later, lightning strikes twice. They unexpectedly meet in Paris...and have only one fading afternoon to decide if they should share their tomorrows.

